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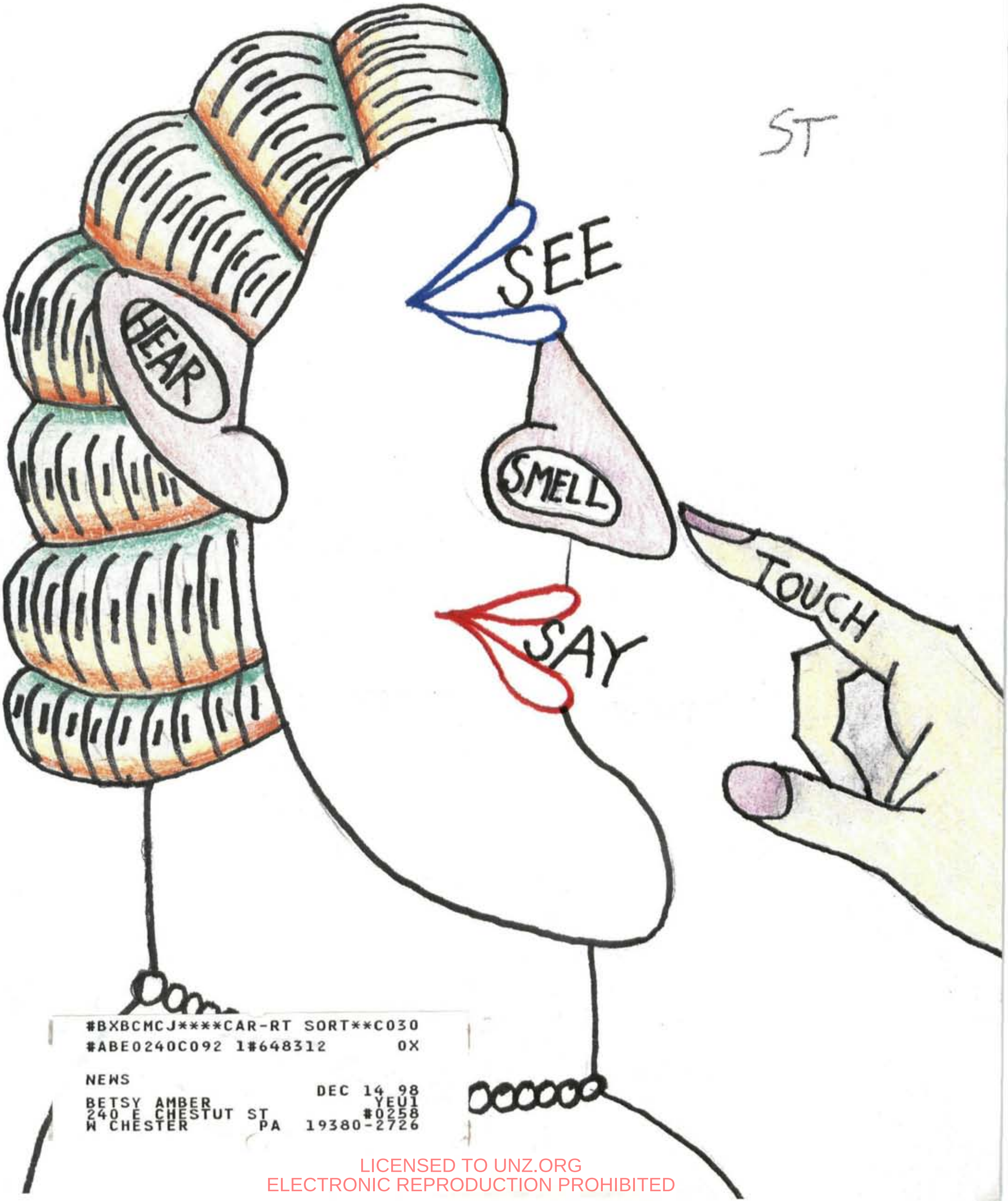
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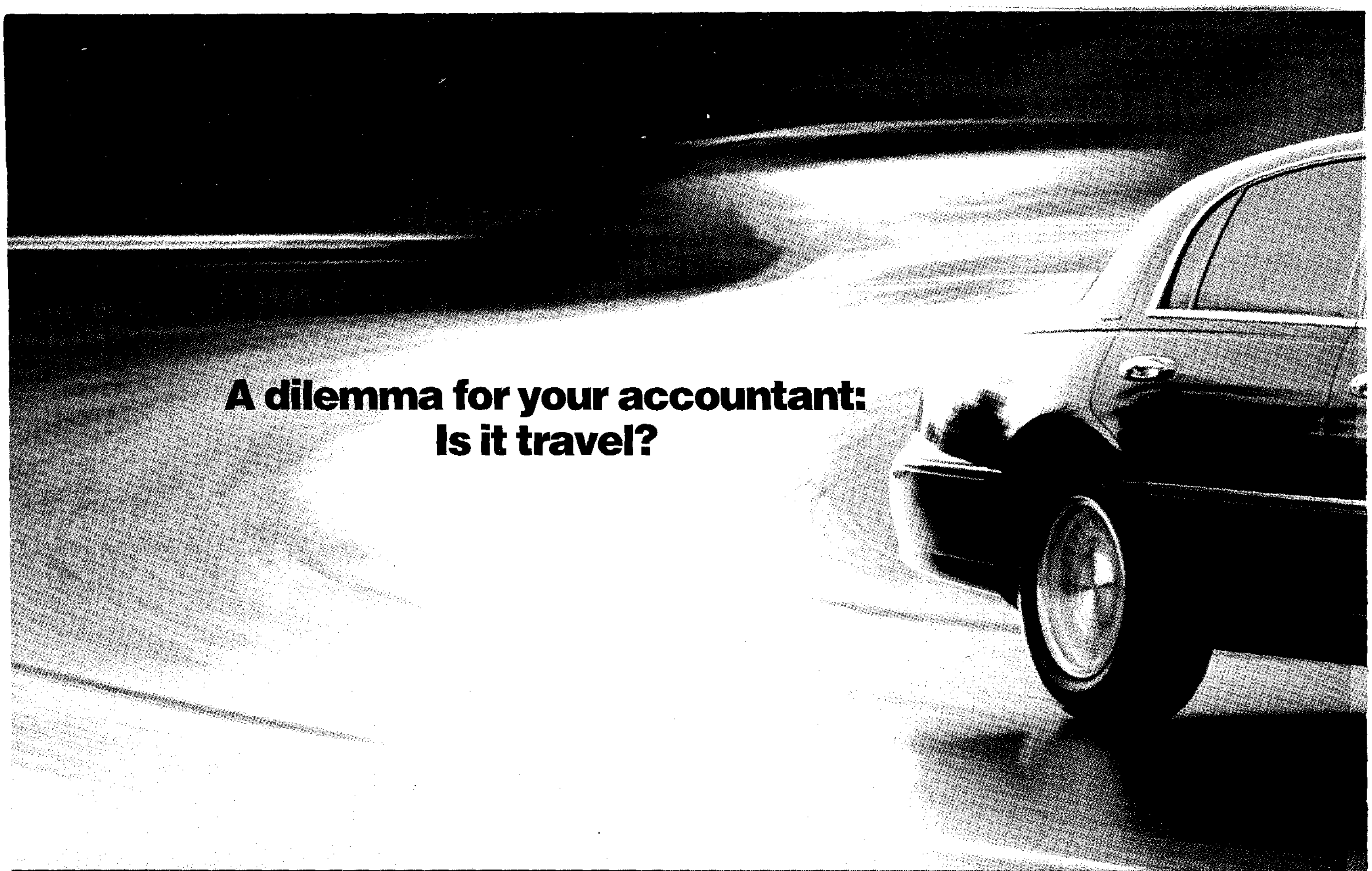
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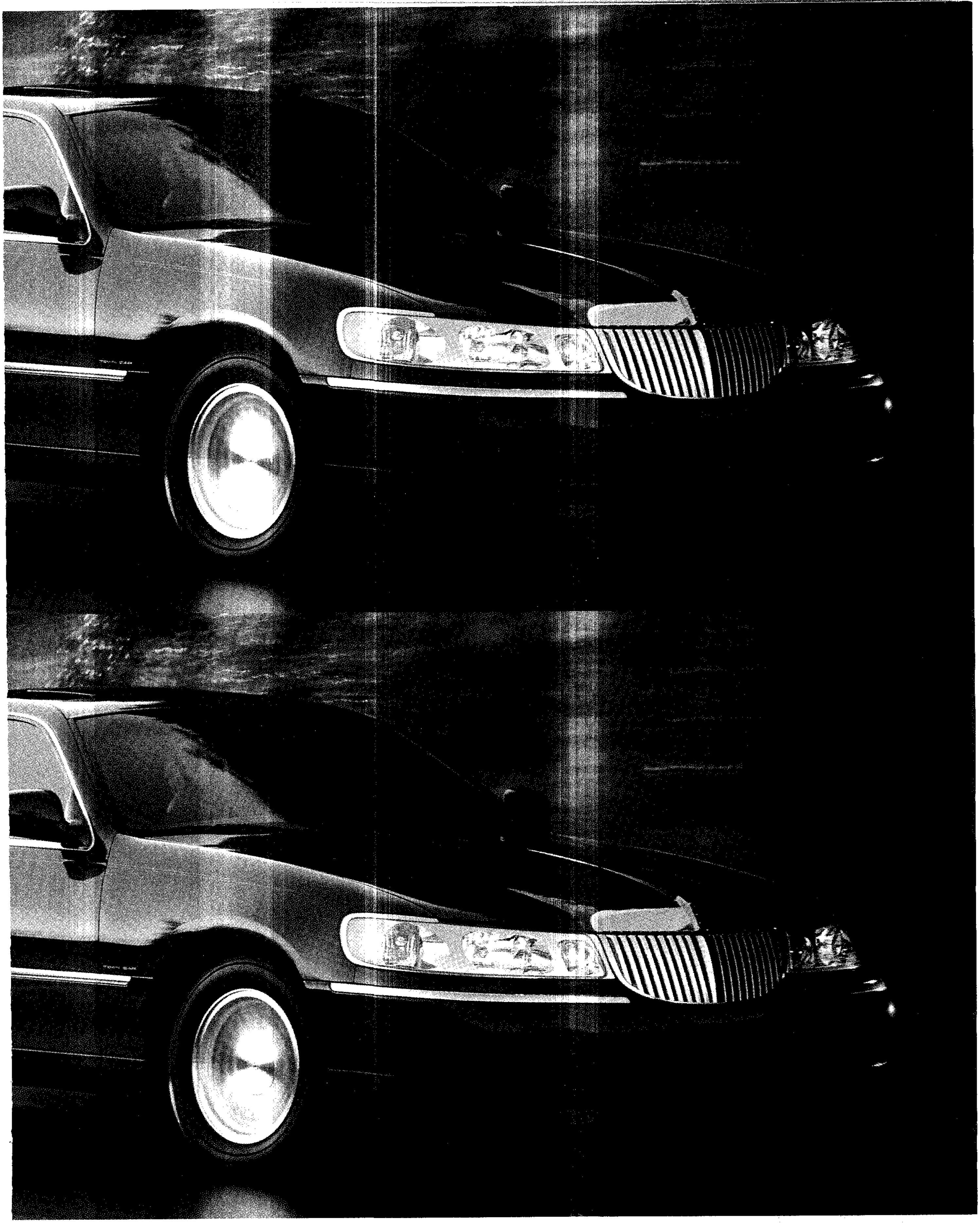

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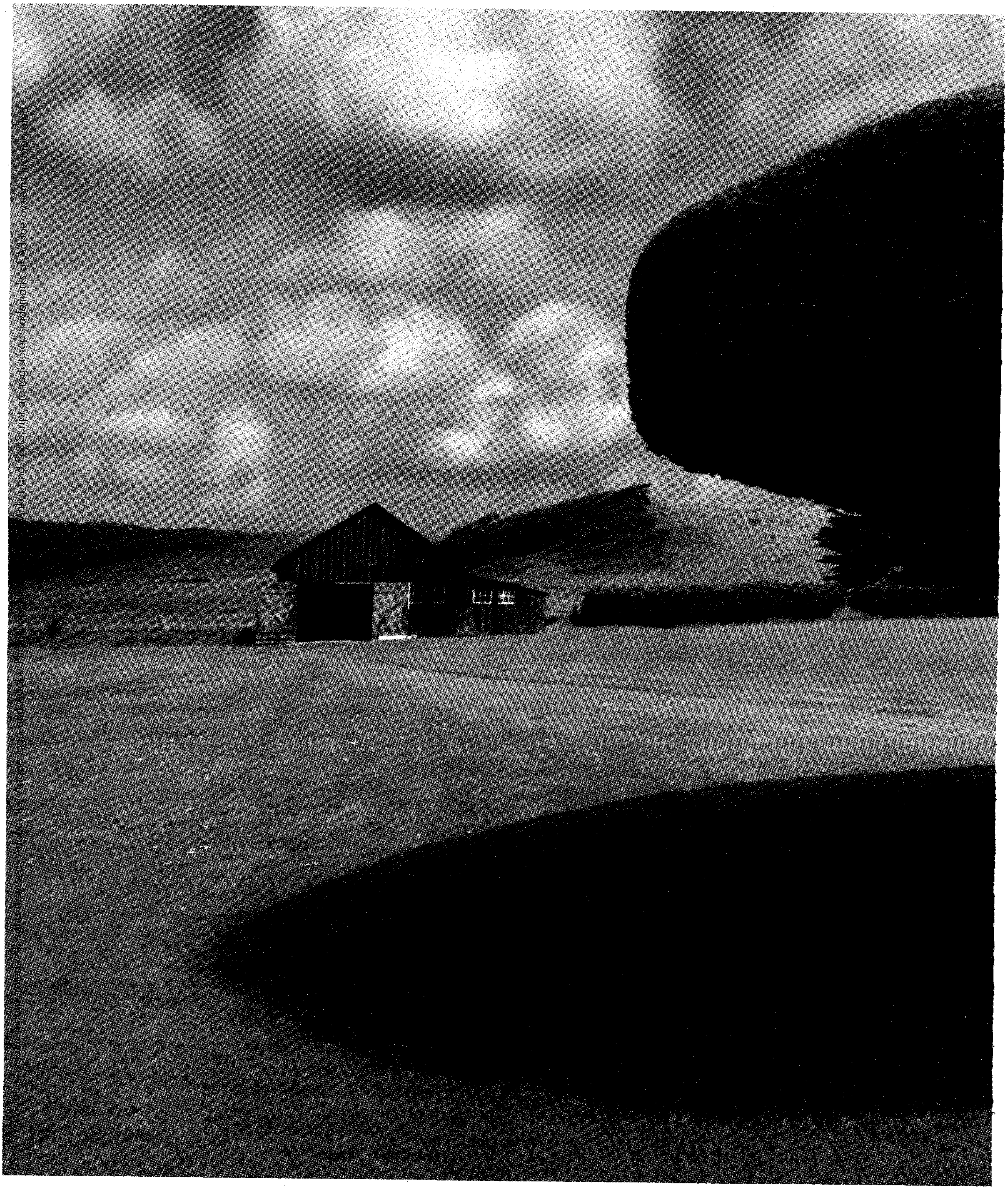

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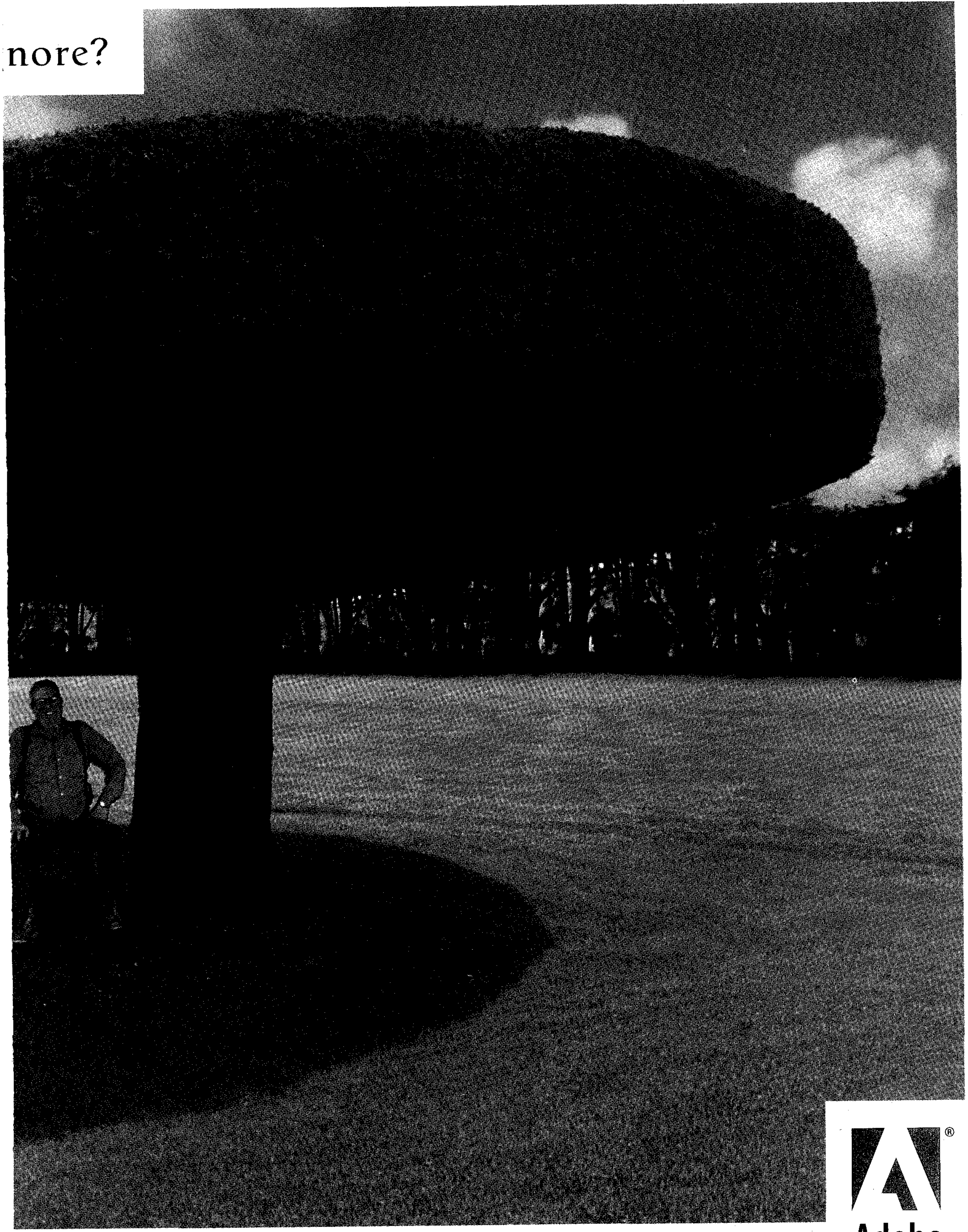

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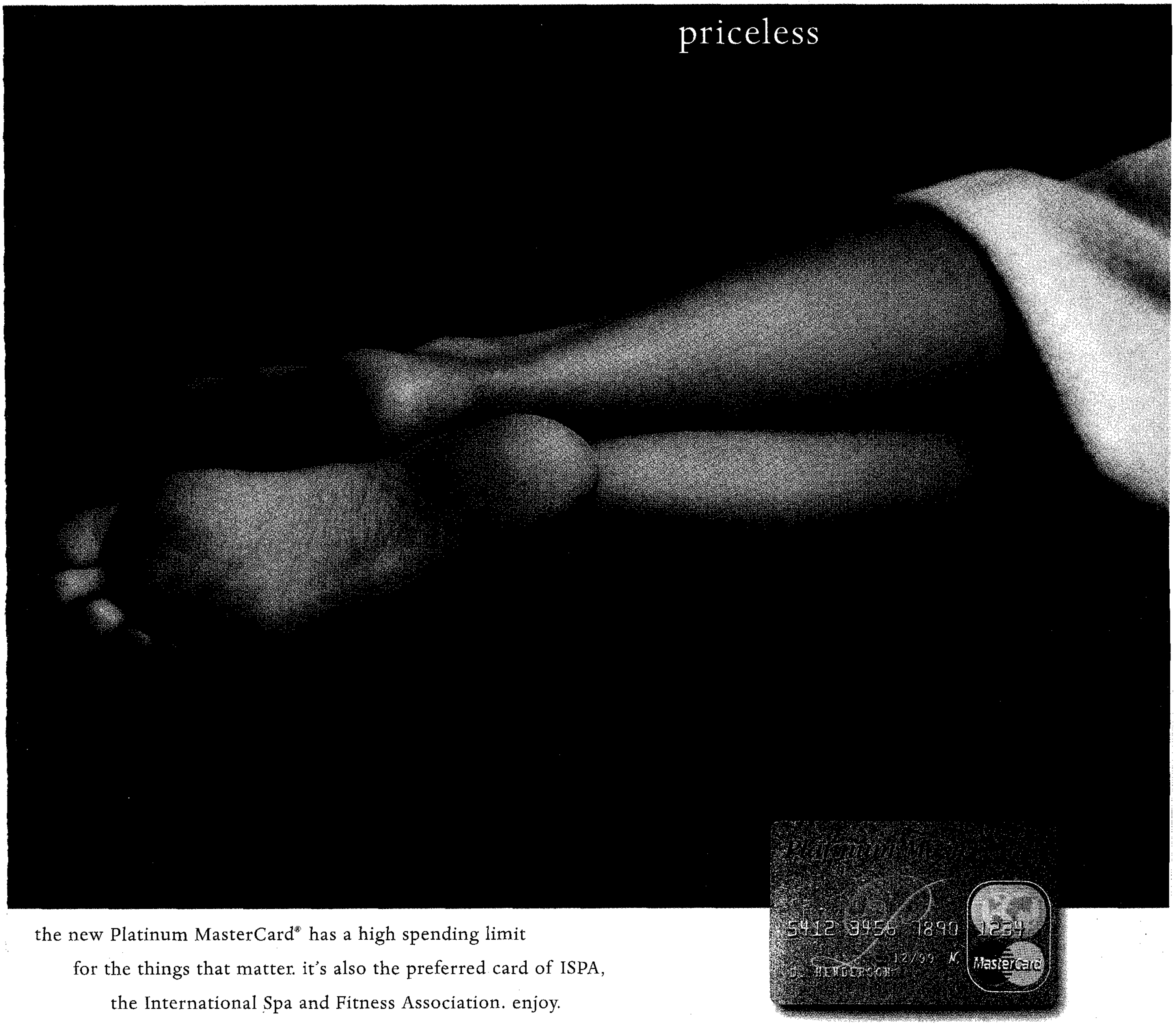
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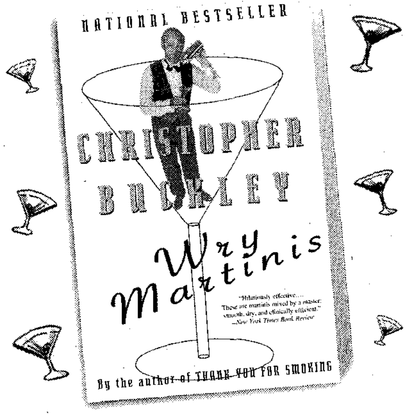

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COMMENT

DA QUALITY OF LIFE

Civil obedience, Giuliani-style.

THE first person in New York City to get a ticket in Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's recent crackdown on jaywalking was a woman named Brenda Barnes who made the mistake of crossing Sixth Avenue illegally while the police officer on duty was being interviewed about the crackdown by a reporter from the *Times*. Ms. Barnes, who had just had her nails done at Saks when she fell into the clutches of the law, turned out to be a student at Cardozo Law School, whose criminal-defense clinics happen to be directed by Professor Barry Scheck. Within two hours of getting the ticket, according to the *Times*, Ms. Barnes had retained the pro-bono services of Professor Scheck's team. It is a lucky thing for the City of New York that a conviction for jaywalking doesn't depend on the results of a DNA test.

It's generally agreed that the decision to enforce the law against jaywalking, which came hard on the heels, as it were, of the decision to erect pedestrian barricades at certain midtown intersections (the brainstorm of a precinct police chief who got irritated one day after sitting too long in a left-turn lane), is the most entertaining thing to have happened in city politics since the Mayor threatened to sue *New York* magazine for using his name in its bus ads. This has been an excellent season for Giulianiana. The Mayor recently found occasion to rebuke a group of parochial-school children for flippancy during a visit to City Hall. (They had been introduced to a cabdriver who was being honored for returning ten thousand dollars he found in his cab; when the Mayor asked them what they would do if they found ten thousand dollars, the children replied, as one, "Keep it.") He invited the Grammy Awards, which the city currently hosts, to get out of town after he learned that the president of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, which runs the show, had used obscene language during an argument with one of the Mayor's aides. And last week, in a speech containing allusions to Plato, he announced a new round of "civility" initiatives, including enhanced enforcement of traffic laws, required civics classes in the public schools, courtesy guidelines for city employees, and a dress code for teachers.

What makes it all so entertaining, of course, is that the Mayor himself is a walking embodiment of the term "in your face." Reasoned dialogue and a respectful exchange of views are not the most celebrated features of his conception of governance. It is typical of the Giuliani approach to decision-making that those pedestrian barricades in mid-

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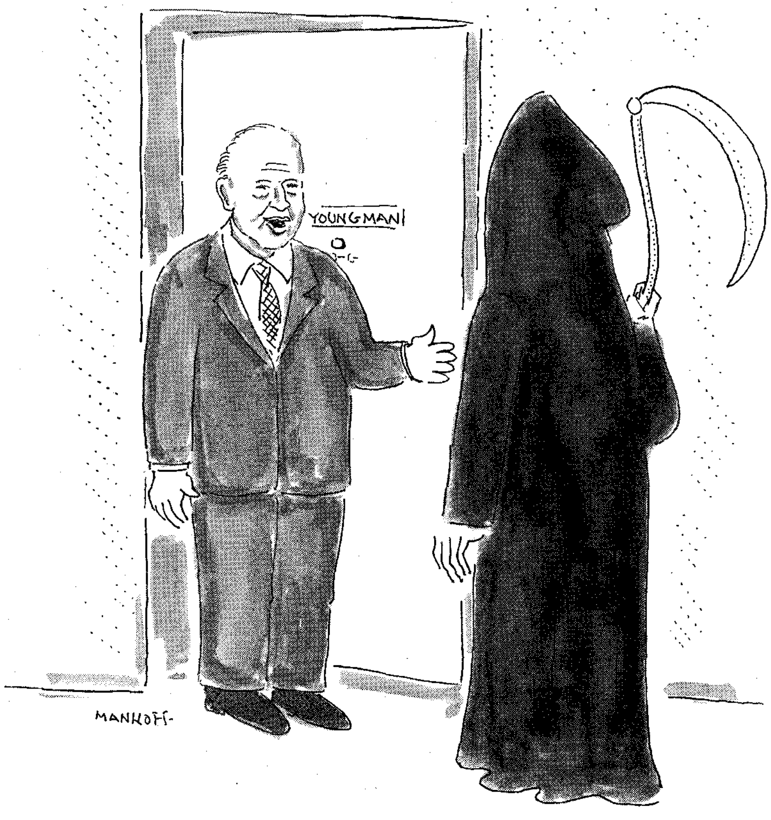
town were not the consequence of repeated requests by concerned citizens but were erected after a city official got annoyed that other people were in his way. The barricades are a perfect example of the form that the new insistence on respect takes, which is: Disrespect *this*, buddy! The new civility looks, in fact, remarkably like the old civility. New Yorkers are accustomed to dealing with other people's rudeness by being rude right back; that's their idea of advanced civics. The Mayor's plan is apparently just to be the rudest anti-rudeness guy in town. You get in *his* space, and you'll be spending the night in jail. Maybe you'll learn a little etiquette there.

Still, New Yorkers seem to like the Mayor's focus on the quality of life—an issue he describes as "the most metaphysical, esoteric, philosophical—whatever." Every New Yorker—every major-city dweller—has his or her own pet aggravation, depending on age, vocation, and method of transportation: car alarms, boom boxes, panhandlers, squeegee men, bicycle messengers, sidewalk skaters, take-out menus, sex shops situated less than five hundred feet from each other. It was nice, for these people, to feel that the government no longer regards such annoyances as facts of life, or treats complaints about them as a joke.

Like all "values" politics, though, quality-of-life politics tends to have a demagogic flavor, because no politician can afford to promote values or preferences that aren't shared by the majority. Cracking down on the squeegee men was easy; squeegee men don't have a lot of political muscle. Jaywalking is different. It's inconceivable that enforcement of the anti-jaywalking law will be anything but selective—the city is going to run into financial problems very quickly if it keeps issuing summonses to people with access to Barry Scheck—and then the test will be whether it gets used, like the old anti-loitering law, as a form of harassment. Not long after the ticketing of Brenda Barnes in midtown, a man named Naser Hidrovic was stopped on a street on the Upper West Side and questioned by two officers in connection with a series of muggings in the neighborhood. On parting from the officers, Mr. Hidrovic, who had evidently not been reading the newspapers, crossed Columbus Avenue in the middle of the block. He was promptly stopped for jaywalking and, when he failed to provide I.D., was brought to the station house, where he was picked out of a lineup by two victims of the muggings. For civility, it was a victory. For civil liberties, the outcome was not so clear. —LOUIS MENAND



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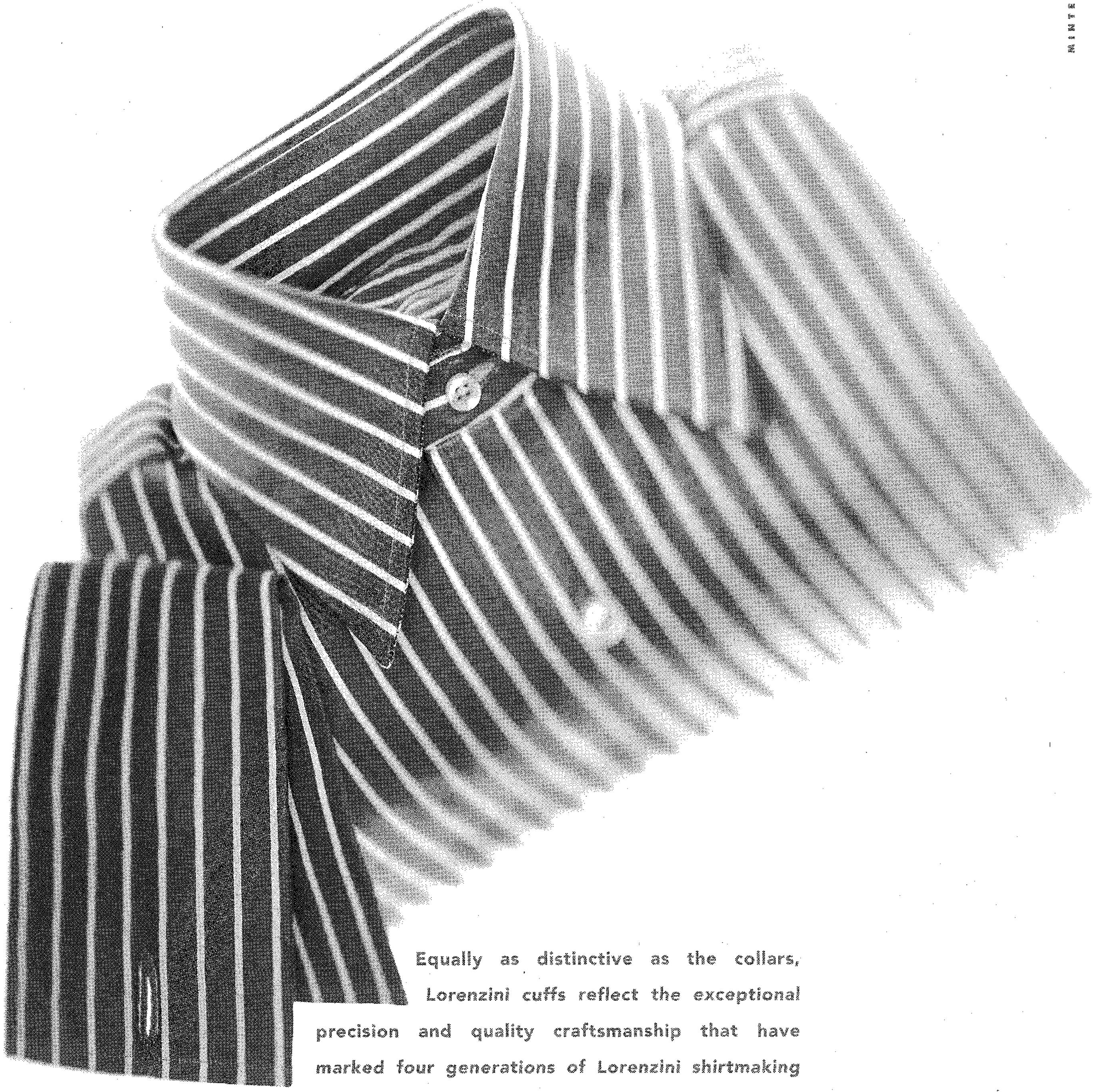

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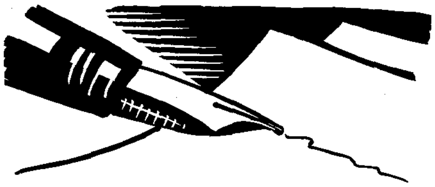

POETRY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Yeats wrote, "We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry." This insight will ultimately help us to read "Birthday Letters," the poems Ted Hughes has written to his dead wife, the poet Sylvia Plath (some of which were printed in the issue of February 2nd). For now, I have to quarrel with "The Minotaur," in which Hughes writes that he had urged Plath to use her violence in her poetry, and that he had thereby given her her true poetry and, along with it, the destruction of her marriage, deep harm to her children and her mother, and, finally, her own death. I do not hold Hughes responsible for Plath's death; I do not hold Hughes responsible for her poetry; and I cannot hold her poetry responsible for her death. In my own experience and deepest belief, poetry is a lifeline, not a deathline: the poet, if she dies, dies in spite of her art, not because of it.

Jean Valentine
New York City

MONOPOLY MONEY

As I read John Cassidy's "The Force of an Idea" (January 12th), about the antitrust case against Microsoft, I was struck by the specious logic that Brian Arthur uses to conclude that high-tech markets have a peculiar feature, "network externalities," which enables firms to exercise powers that hurt consumers and therefore may require "surgically applied intervention" aimed at "protecting consumer choice and preventing the abuse of market power." On the one hand, Arthur and Cassidy argue that network externalities are extremely powerful, because the term "means that the value of a product increases along with the number of other people who are already using it"—a process that confers a higher value on the market leader's products than on the products of its competitors. So the power inherent in a network externality is a function of the value it creates for the consumer: low value, low power; high value, high power. On the other hand, Arthur and Cassidy argue that, owing to the high power of network externalities, consumers suffer, because new products without the benefit of network externalities get squeezed out. To illustrate the suffering this causes consumers, Cassidy uses the example of DR-DOS's failure to supplant the market-leading operating system, MS-DOS (even though DR-DOS was at best a modest improvement on MS-DOS).

If we put the two sides of the Arthur/Cassidy argument together, we find that consumers suffer greatly from network externalities because they benefit greatly from network externalities. Which is it? The answer is tautological: the level of suffering is constrained to be lower than the level of benefit, because otherwise the power of the externality will evaporate. The fact is that consumers maximize their welfare by waiting patiently for new products, those that provide such a compelling improvement that they will quickly enhance their own value by producing a new generation of network externalities (e.g., CDs versus vinyl records). That notwithstanding, in the fractured logic of Arthur and Cassidy consumers must be protected from seizing a benefit that is guaranteed to be greater than its cost. This is protection that consumers are quite happy to live without!

Roger L. Martin
Director, Monitor Company
Cambridge, Mass.

WALLET ENVY

James Atlas, in "The Whistle of Money" (February 2nd), seems to be asking (to paraphrase Henry Higgins), Why can't an artist be more like a stockbroker? The answer is that our society venerates money, not intellect, and Atlas's panting after wealth only shows how deep that corruption of the spirit goes.

P. Myatt Olsen
Vershire, Vt.

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About the only aspect of the health care debate any two people might agree on is that the system needs work. We'd like to weigh in with a few ideas of our own since we're actually in the position to do something about it. ■ First off, the paramount focus of health care must be quality. Which is why we're working to enable a level of health care never available under the old fee-for-service system. ■ We can't do it alone. So we're joining with academic medicine to make the system better. We've pioneered and allocated $15 million to fund the Academic Medicine and Managed Care Forum. An ongoing gathering of our experts, and those from more than 30 leading universities and teaching hospitals. Including Johns Hopkins, Yale, Emory, Baylor, University of Pennsylvania and Stanford. Together, we're seeking new ways to help get patients the health care they need. ■ Already, we send timely reminders that encourage members to see their doctors for immunizations to prevent illness and screenings that diagnose disease early enough to do something about it. One result has been a significant reduction in late-stage breast cancer. ■ To better manage chronic diseases, we've created outreach efforts that have reduced asthma emergencies 60%, promoted eyesight-saving laser therapy for diabetics, and improved the quality of life for people with congestive heart failure. ■ There's more work to be done. And we'll do more than our share of it. Because no matter how complex, it has never been our policy to turn our back on a problem. Whether it's that of a patient, or of an entire health care system.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Ah, Wilderness!—A Lincoln Center Theatre revival of Eugene O'Neill's comedy, set on Independence Day in 1906. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont. 239-6200.)

Amazing Grace—A murderess (Marsha Mason) reëvaluates her life from her cell on death row, in a drama by Michael Cristofer. In previews. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

BAFO (Best and Final Offer)—Tom Strelich's dark comedy about post-Cold War defense-industry layoffs in Southern California. In previews through March 7. Opens March 8 at 7. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

Cabaret—Natasha Richardson stars in a Roundabout Theatre revival of the 1966 Kander and Ebb musical. Sam Mendes is the director. Rob Marshall choreographed and co-directed. In previews. (Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. 719-1300.)

The Deep Blue Sea—Blythe Danner and Edward Herrmann return to the stage in a revival of Terence Rattigan's 1952 drama. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

The Emperor Jones—The Wooster Group's staging of O'Neill's early drama. In previews. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651.)

A Flea in Her Ear—Bill Irwin directs Georges Feydeau's 1907 farce. Mark Linn-Baker leads the cast. Two previews on March 4. Opens March 5 at 7:30. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300.)

Hazelwood Jr. High—The New Group goes site-specific with a play by Rob Urbinati, based on a real-life murder inside a schoolgirl coterie. Preview on March 4. Opens March 5 at 8. (Intermediate School 70, 333 W. 17th St. 279-4200.)

La Mama—March 4-7 at 8 and March 8 at 3:30 and 8: The Ridge Theatre presents two short plays by Mac Wellman, "The Damned Thing" and "The Sandalwood Box," directed by Bob McGrath. . . . ¶ March 5-8 at 7:30: "Fiesta Ware," a gay drama by Milton Diaz. . . . ¶ March 5-7 at 10: "Broadway '68," a revue of tunes from one musical-theatre season. (74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

Macbeth—Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett star in George C. Wolfe's staging of Shakespeare's tragedy. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Mystery School—Tyne Daly portrays five women in search of salvation, in a one-woman show written by Paul Selig. In previews. (Angel Orensanz Foundation Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St., at E. Houston St. 239-6200.)

Paul McKenna's Hypnotic World—The British-television mesmerizer comes to Broadway. Seven performances only, beginning March 8 at 7 and continuing through March 29.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
8	9	10	4	5	6	7

(Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Side Man—Michael Mayer directs a drama by Warren Leight, set during the forties, about a musician's preoccupation with big-band jazz. In previews. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 279-4200.)

The Sound of Music—The hills are alive (aah-aah-aaaaaaaaah) again. Rebecca Luker is Maria. Susan H. Schulman is the director. In previews. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Top of the Bottom Half—A multicharacter one-woman show about growing up in the South, starring Liza Vann. March 4-6 at 8, March 7 at 2:30 and 8, and March 8 at 2:30. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Art—In the French playwright Yasmina Reza's drama, a debate about a piece of modern art fractures the friendship of three men (Alan Alda, Victor Garber, and Alfred Molina). Matthew Warchus is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—The Atlantic Theatre Company presents a dark comedy, set in County Galway, by the young Irish playwright Martin McDonagh. (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

Benita Canova—Richard Foreman's latest concoction, a lush exploration of erotic violence, is a memorable, perceptive, and voyeuristic experience. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)

Black Humor—Topical comedy, written and performed by the political satirist Lewis Black. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Closes March 28.)

The Capeman—This musical, which marks Paul Simon's theatrical début, is based on a notorious killing that took place in New York in 1959. Some of the melodies are lovely, but the lyrics and the book, which Simon co-wrote with Derek Walcott, wallow in phony pieties about guilt and redemption. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/9/98.) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

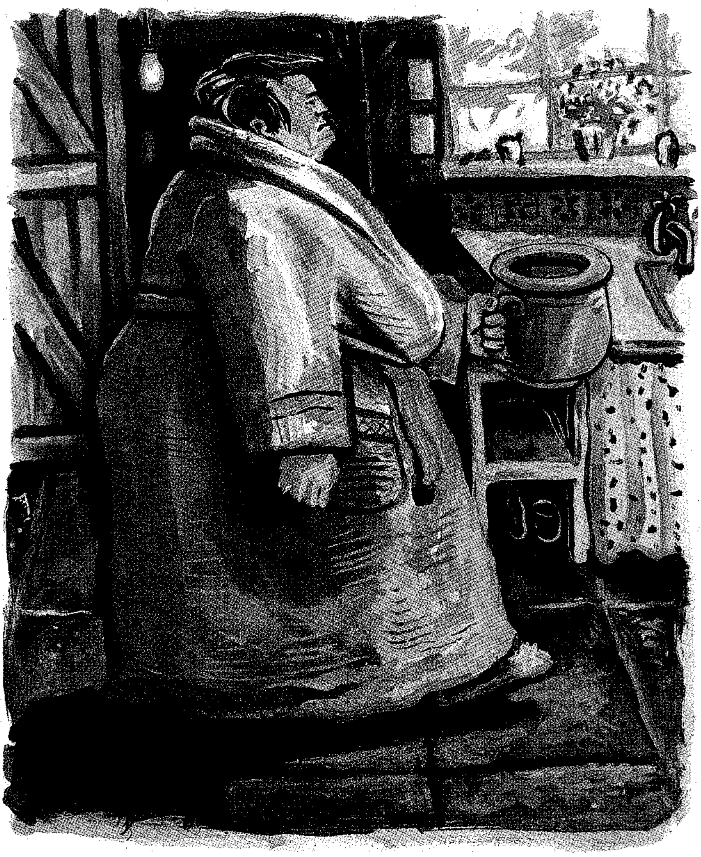
The Diary of Anne Frank—Theatrically, this revival and reworking of the 1955 play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, under the direction of James Lapine, is generally fine. But the play's dogged realism is a fundamental flaw. One of the truths we take away from Anne's diary is that we *can't* really know what it was like. (12/15/97) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Eyes for Consuela—Sam Shepard's new play, which stars David Strathairn, is an adaptation of Octavio Paz's 1976 short story "The Blue Bouquet." (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Freak—John Leguizamo ("Spic-O-Rama") portrays dozens of characters in his new one-man comedy. Directed by David Bar Katz. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The Handless Maiden—A contemporary fairy tale by Jeremy Dobrish. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 924-0077.)

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—Hedwig, as written and portrayed by John Cameron Mitchell, is a sweet transsexual singer from East Berlin, who, between songs, recounts her adventures there, as well as in the demimondes of rock and roll and Junction City, Kansas. This cabaret performance cum stadium act ultimately becomes a smart, funny, and very moving exploration of the redemptive, if perhaps fleeting, power of love. Stephen Trask's music and lyrics (performed by Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Trask, Miriam Shor, and the band Cheater) simultaneously celebrate and send up nearly every modern-rock trope. Peter Askin's direction and the thoughtful sets and projections, by James Youmans, and lighting, by Kevin Adams, precisely evoke Hedwig's ragged world. But it's Hedwig's show, and Mr. Mitchell is captivating



"The Beauty Queen of Leenane," at the Atlantic.

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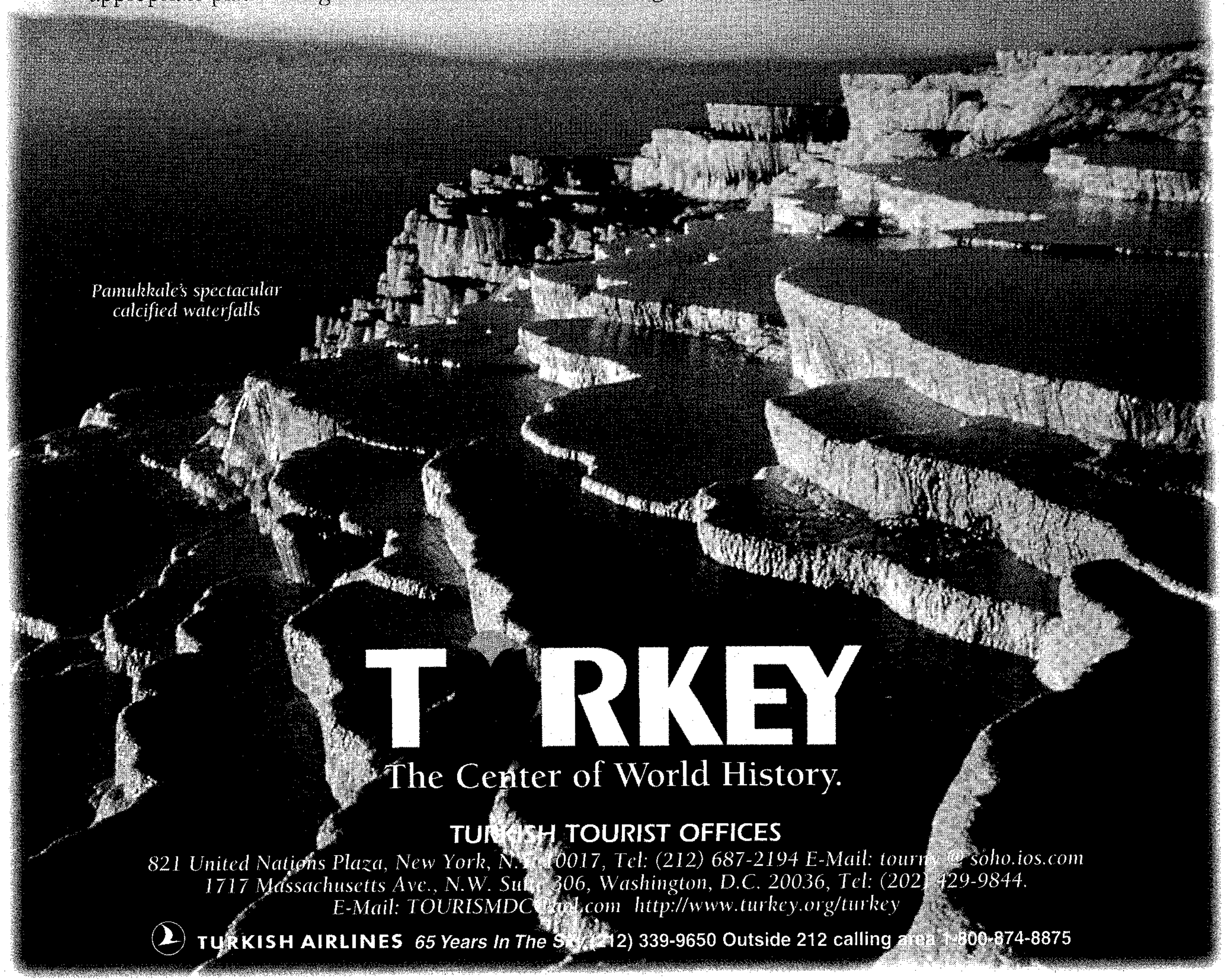

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throughout. (Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200.)

I Will Come Back—The Judy Garland impersonator Tommy Femia pursues his livelihood in this musical about the singer's life. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

Joseph Gabriel Magic '98—Mr. Gabriel comes to New York by way of Las Vegas. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

June Moon—Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman's 1929 comedy, set in the world of Tin Pan Alley, is a loving satire of show-biz and musical-comedy conventions, and it has been given an appropriately loving revival. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

The Lion King—The director Julie Taymor has created a theatrical event far more textured and original than the animated film, submerging the audience in a mythic universe; it's like being in a dream awake. The show's high visual style, however, is in sharp contrast to its low verbal one. (11/24/97) (New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

The Maiden's Prayer—Nicky Silver's newest play, like his earlier work, depicts relationships—or the displays of need and greed that pass for relationships—between emotional cripples. Superficially, it may seem to be a more mature and serious play than some of his others, because it's less manic and more realistic, but it feels cold and artificial. Silver, who does have something to say about the enormous gulf between what people want and what they get, has said it better, and with more heat, before. Only the mordant, whiskey-voiced Patricia Clarkson keeps the evening from being altogether plodding. Evan Yionoulis directed. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Closes March 15.)

Mamba's Daughters—This Target Margin Theatre production of Dorothy and DuBose Heyward's 1939 play about racism in the Carolina Low Country includes several peculiar costuming choices, but they create only a minor distraction from the sensitive and believable performances. Working against a rather melodramatic plot, the director, David Herskovits, has shrewdly stylized some of the action and line readings, without restricting the actors. For all its overt theatricality, the production takes the audience into the emotional lives of these plantation workers, their bosses, and their great hope: a young singer whose romantic problems her mother attempts to solve by committing murder. In a large cast, Heather Gillespie and William Badgett stand out; the singing, especially Ms. Gillespie's version of Jerome Kern's "Lonesome Walls," is a show in itself. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes March 14.)

Marc Salem's Mindgames—The mentalist claims that his highly entertaining mind-reading act is both hocus-pocus-free and scam-free. Still, his fascinating "tricks" seem like magic, and at times you feel like you're the only person in the audience who isn't a plant. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

Mizlansky/Zilinsky; or, Schmucks—Nathan Lane and Lewis J. Stadlen star in a new comedy by Jon Robin Baitz. Staged by Joe Mantello. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

My One Good Nerve—Ruby Dee's one-woman show. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Closes March 8.)

Never the Sinner—John Logan's 1985 play about Leopold and Loeb sweeps its audience into the boys' friendship without ever losing sight of the brutal murder—a balancing act that Mr. Logan and the director, Ethan McSweeny, carry off seamlessly. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

The Old Neighborhood—David Mamet's three elegant, autobiographical one-act plays full of laughter and lament. Serious, beautiful, and short: an almost impossible feat these days on Broadway. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Pride's Crossing—Tina Howe's new play is a tedious switchback ride up a mountain of memories from the life of Mabel Tidings Bigelow, who is ninety and once swam the English Channel. Fortunately, Mabel is portrayed by Cherry Jones, who polishes all the tics, fumbles, and feisty outbursts of a nonagenarian to a high shine. Jack O'Brien directed. (1/5/98) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Ragtime—E. L. Doctorow's epic novel chronicling three turn-of-the-century New York families (Wasp, Jewish, and black) is here transformed into a historical pageant designed along the magisterial theatrical lines of Noël Coward's "Cavalcade" and Jerome Kern's "Show Boat." It's a big, brave, passionate gamble, masterfully directed by Frank Galati. (2/2/98) (Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

R & J—Four students at a boys' boarding school mount a production of "Romeo and Juliet," in this adaptation by Joe Calarco. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 354-2220.)

Richard II and **Richard III**—The beginning and the end of the Wars of the Roses, presented in repertory by Theatre for a New Audience. Ron Daniels, the director, has made a thematic mess of two of Shakespeare's most politically astute—and darkly funny—plays. But Christopher McCann's Richard III is frighteningly seductive, and Neil Patel's versatile sets, along with Donald Holder's lighting effects, create a moody ambience. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

Richard II—"His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last / For violent fires soon burn out themselves," John of Gaunt (John Wylie) says of his nephew King Richard II (Bradford Cover). Cover's Richard evolves affectingly from a confident monarch with an ironic smirk to a miserable, deposed prisoner who comes to realize: "I wasted time, and now doth time waste me." Other elements (the visuals, some of the acting) in this Pearl Theatre Company production of the Bard's play are not as keen as Cover's performance. With Seth Jones as Henry Bolingbroke. Directed by Shepard Sobel. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802. Closes March 22.)

Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants—The sleight-of-hand artist returns to the stage with an encore production of his 1994 one-man show. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 787-3471.)

Rootless Beauties—Two rarely seen Tennessee Williams one-acts, "Confessional" and "The Mutilated." (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 886-1889.)

The Scarlet Pimpernel—This new musical, based on the Baroness Orczy novel, has a lot going for it (if you don't count its music and lyrics, which are dreadful and appalling, respectively): its charismatic star, Douglas Sills, Andrew Jackness's sets, and Jane Greenwood's costumes. Peter Hunt directed. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—A comic revue inspired by the Fodor's handbook of the same title. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)

Shopping and Fucking—A small, sketchy piece of British boulevard nihilism, by the first-time playwright Mark Ravenhill, which attempts to dramatize capitalism's warping effects. (2/16/98) (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

The Sunshine Boys—A revival of Neil Simon's comedy about two irascible old vaudevillians, starring Ye Olde Odd Couple of television, Tony Randall and Jack Klugman. The sandpapery friction that the twosome created so successfully on TV isn't much in evidence—they seem reduced to lovability. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Two Pianos, Four Hands—With the Canadian keyboardists Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Closes March 22.)

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Visiting Mr. Green—Jeff Baron's sweet if predictable Upper West Side comedy, about two Jewish men of different generations. Eli Wallach, in a masterly performance, finds great dignity in the title character, an eighty-six-year-old widower. Lonny Price directed. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.)

You Can't Take It with You—The National Asian American Theatre Company, a trusty troupe whose approach to the classics is long on charm and short on pomposity, has hooked up with the Ma-Yi Theatre Ensemble to take on Kaufman and Hart's 1936 comedy about an eccentric family. The first fifteen minutes are slow going, but the evening flies by once the actors' infectious delight in the show's old-fashioned kookiness takes over. (Connelly Theatre, 220 E. 4th St. 505-3003. Closes March 7.)

LONG RUNS

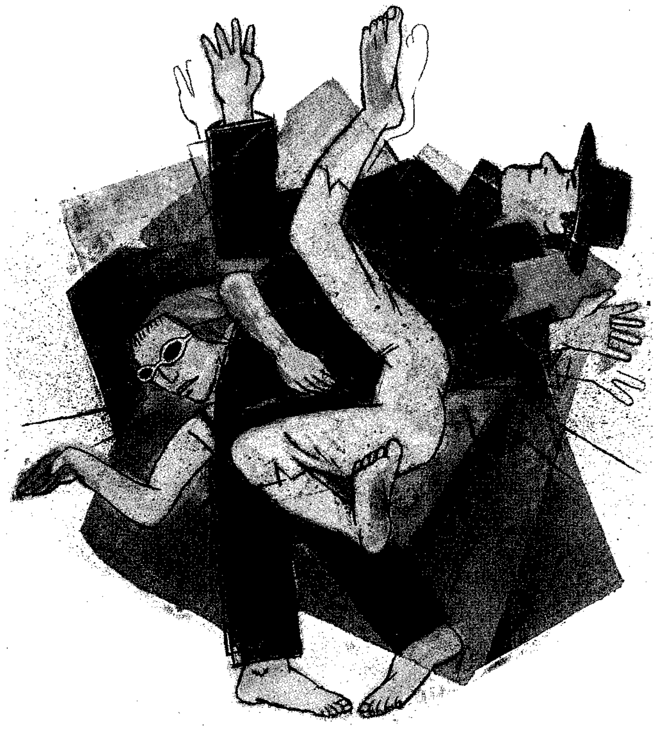
AS BEES IN HONEY DROWN: Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **FOREVER TANGO:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE:** Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE:** Century, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JEKYLL & HYDE:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 279-4200. . . . **THE LIFE:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **1776:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TITANIC:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200.

DANCE

Paul Taylor Dance Company—A harbinger of spring: the perennially ardent choreographer appears at City Center with some sublime repertory and revivals (the all-of-life-in-a-dance "Esplanade" and the apocalyptic "Last Look") and two new works, "The Word" and "Piazzolla Caldera." The latter is a steamy dance-hall number, which Taylor recently described in misleadingly modest terms: "I figured if we started with a couple of tango steps, from there we could go anywhere." March 3 at 7:30, March 7 and March 10 at 8, and March 8 at 3: "Danbury Mix," "Prime Numbers," and "Piazzolla Caldera." . . ¶ March 4-5 at 8 and March 8 at 7:30: "Mercuric Tidings," "Eventide," and the première of "The Word." . . ¶ March 6 at 8 and March 7 at 2: "Arden Court," "Last Look," and "Esplanade." (131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Through March 15.)

"La Bête"—The Montreal company O Vertigo returns with a full-length work, by choreographer Ginette Laurin, in which ten dancers embody self-created dream characters—the clockmaker, the woman-lion, twilight, etc. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. March 3-7 at 8 and March 8 at 7:30.)

"Pig"—The choreographer Linda Austin, who has recently been splitting her time between New York and Central America, sets the movements of her seven dancers to a score for homemade instruments by Leslie Ross. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. March 5-8 at 8:30.)



Sally Silvers and Dancers, in "HushHush," at D.T.W.'s Carnival.

Carnival—Dance Theatre Workshop continues its choreographers' showcase. March 3-4 at 8: **DAVID NEUMANN** and his six-member troupe appear in "Duck, You Sucker," "It's Gonna Rain," and "Appropriate Behavior." . . . ¶ March 5-6 at 8: The **SEÁN CURRAN** company offers five works, including "Folk Dance for the Future" and "Enough Is Too Much." . . ¶ March 7 at 8 and March 8 at 3: **SALLY SILVERS** fits her fast-paced choreography to a promisingly frenetic subject: the sleazy underside of Camelot-era politics. "HushHush," an hour-long work loosely based on James Ellroy's novel "American Tabloid," presents a roguish company of politicos, Mafiosos, Cuban exiles, and their dames, in a rapid series of trios, duets, and other entanglements. The program also includes Silvers' solo "Sugar Raised," her homage to glazed doughnuts. . . . ¶ March 10 at 8: **DAVID PARKER AND THE BANG GROUP.** (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Through March 22.)

"Raw Again"—Bill Young and Dancers open the season at the 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Project with two tender works about intimacy, "Fault" and "Sudden Skin." (Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. 996-1100. March 7-10 at 8.)

Red Star Red Army Chorus and Dance—The company, formed in 1977 to entertain Soviet Strategic Missile Forces, performs a program of traditional ethnic dances under the sponsorship of the Independence Savings Bank. (Whitman Theatre, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 718-951-4500. March 8 at 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

The Allman Brothers Band—The front end of a fifteen-evening set with the battle-scarred veterans from Macon. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. March 4, March 6-8, and March 10, all at 8. Through March 22.)

"Salute to Phil Woods"—More than forty years down the line, Woods still breathes bop. The alto saxophonist, who speaks fluent Parker but has his own ripely romantic take on the master, is playing better than ever. Clark Terry, another paragon of longevity (he's now in his sixth professional decade), is among those tipping their hats and horns to Woods. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. March 5 at 8.)

Ben Harper—The intelligent alternative to Lenny Kravitz, this modern bluesman sings in a gruff roadhouse whisper. On his recent album, "The Will to Live," he raids the past with respect and discretion. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. March 6 at 7:30.)

"Six Degrees of the 70s"—An all-acoustic concert celebrating the music of Harry Chapin, Kool and the Gang, the Beach Boys, Isaac Hayes, and Marvin Gaye. The performers include Jen Chapin, Rachid Bell, Carnie and Wendy Wilson, Isaac Hayes III and Heather Hayes, and Marvin Gaye III. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 6 at 8.)

Paco de Lucia and Sextet—De Lucia may be as familiar to devotees of Carlos Saura films as he is to music fans: the flamenco guitarist cut a dashing figure in "Blood Wedding," "Carmen," and "Flamenco." He combines lightning-quick technique with a flair for integrating non-flamenco idioms. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. March 6 at 8.)

Kartik Seshadri—The young sitarist, a disciple of Ravi Shankar, performs with tabla player Arup Chatterjee. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. 545-7536. March 6 at 8.)

Eros Ramazzotti—The Italian pinup and pop star. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. March 6 at 8.)

The Celtic Fiddle Festival—An evening of Irish, Scottish, and Breton bowmanship. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 7 at 8.)

"Jazz Piano at the Y"—Two of the world's most venerable and likable pianists, Dick Hyman and George Shearing, remind us what the jazz keyboard sounded like before the ascendancy of Herbie Hancock and McCoy Tyner. Hyman and Shearing's choruses carry elegant echoes of Teddy Wilson, Fats Waller, Bud Powell, Bill Evans, and other classicists. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. March 7 at 8.)

Tibet House New York Benefit Concert—Scheduled to perform are Natalie Merchant, Patti Smith, Yungchen Lhamo, Caetano Veloso, Philip Glass, John Cale, Sheryl Crow, Ed Kowalczyk and Chad Taylor, and Angelique Kidjo. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. March 9 at 7:30.)

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

Harry Connick, Jr.—The New Orleans showman. (Avery Fisher Hall. March 9-10 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—March 5: The James Taylor-with-fangs folk of **Loudon Wainwright III.** March 7: **Jane Siberry.** Though her work continues to appear in unlikely mainstream places (K. D. Lang's latest album; the soundtrack to "The Sweet Hereafter"), this eclectic Canadian songwriter remains a cult figure: her distinctive blend of aloofness and whimsicality often seems self-defeating. Siberry, who recently started her own label (Sheba), records her every experimental musing—not entirely a great thing. In her unpredictable performances, she's done everything from Christmas carols to reinterpretations of old children's records. With promising downtown singer-songwriter **David Poe.**

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. Tattooed East Village folk star **Daniel Cartier** (March 4) evokes Gen X ennui with the sweetest tenor (Irish or not) we've heard in a while.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—March 6-7: Rock-and-roll piano player **Johnnie Johnson,** Chuck Berry's first bandleader.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel dungeon deep in the heart of the meat district. March 7: **Hassan Hakmoun** and his band **Zahar** hail from Morocco, but they've been living in New York for the better part of the nineties. The experience has enriched their music in unusual ways—at times they sound more like Brooklyn than Marrakech. Expect a huge, churning sound: North African rhythms, Western melodies, raga, and Hakmoun's soaring, otherworldly voice.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. March 6: Celtic pop with **Susan McKeown and the Chanting House.** March 8: The **Sun Ra Arkestra.** The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

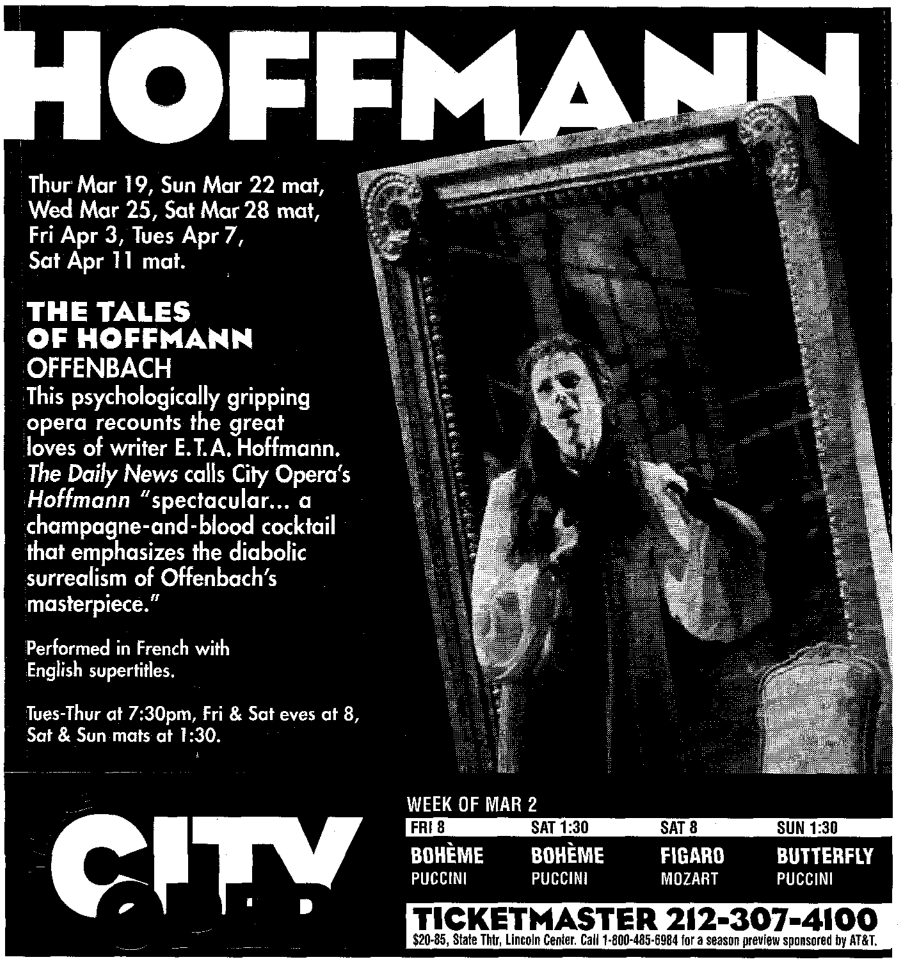
Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—March 4: The below-average pop of **Reel Big Fish.** March 5: **Gov't Mule,** a bristling Allman Brothers offshoot led by slide guitarist Warren Haynes.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—March 4: The **Jazz Passengers with Debbie Harry.** Though they still enjoy a joke more than your average band, these days the Jazz Passengers take themselves quite seriously as musicians—a fact that has helped them survive while other eighties downtown figures have fallen. At their least affected, they make clever, uncategorizable music, particularly when they're joined by the always graceful Ms. Harry.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—A medium-sized, brick-walled haven of a back room where, no matter who's onstage, the listening is a pleasure. March 7: Much-in-demand downtown guitarist **Gary Lucas.** March 9: The three-woman funk-and-cabaret operation known as **Betty.**

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Dining.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—March 6: Local funksters **Milo Z.** March 8: The up-and-coming **Rosie Ledet,** one of only a few female zydeco performers.


HOFFMANN

Thur Mar 19, Sun Mar 22 mat,
Wed Mar 25, Sat Mar 28 mat,
Fri Apr 3, Tues Apr 7,
Sat Apr 11 mat.

THE TALES OF HOFFMANN
OFFENBACH

This psychologically gripping opera recounts the great loves of writer E.T.A. Hoffmann. *The Daily News* calls City Opera's *Hoffmann* "spectacular... a champagne-and-blood cocktail that emphasizes the diabolic surrealism of Offenbach's masterpiece."

Performed in French with English supertitles.

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JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Michael's Pub at Bill's Gay Nineties, 57 E. 54th St. (758-2272)—The ultra-soignée cabaret diva **Julie Wilson** begins an open-ended run in an unlikely setting. Who knows?

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—March 4: The **Herbie Nichols** project. The underappreciated pianist and composer, who died in 1963, was a musician's musician who recorded only a handful of times. His work had an outsider tinge and a formal perfection that rivalled Thelonious Monk's. Nichols recorded his tunes only in piano-trio settings, so it'll be a pleasure to hear them fleshed out by a horn-driven band; on last year's "Love Is Proximity," the Project proved that it's got his idiosyncrasies down cold. March 5-7: The **Freddie Hubbard** quintet. Through all the mishaps of a thirty-five-year career—flitting from one trend to the next, a recent bout with lip trouble—Hubbard's stature as one of the great modern-jazz trumpeters has remained unchallenged. At his best, he combines classic hard-bop soulfulness with the questing vision of the sixties' modal pioneers. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—The **McCoy Tyner** trio and the **Latin Jazz All-Stars** are in through March 8. Had pianist Tyner retired after leaving John Coltrane's group in 1965, he'd still be remembered as one of the most brilliant and individualistic players of an era that prized iconoclasts. But Tyner never succumbed to the temptations of an electronic age; on his seventies records, he didn't have to plug in his piano to make it thunder with authority. A certain laxness pervades his eighties work, but his drive returned with the dawn of the nineties. These days, he exhibits his thrilling Tatum-meets-Trane maneuverings with terrific panache./The Latin Jazz All-Stars have a slew of accomplished players, including trombonist **Steve Turre,** trumpeter **Terrell Stafford,** and flutist **Dave Valentin.** Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The indestructible **Eartha Kitt**—whose allure has been only slightly dimmed by her taxicab purrings—has the run of the Café Carlyle through March 7. . . . ¶Across the hall, pianist **Peter Mintun** is in charge at Bemelmans Bar.

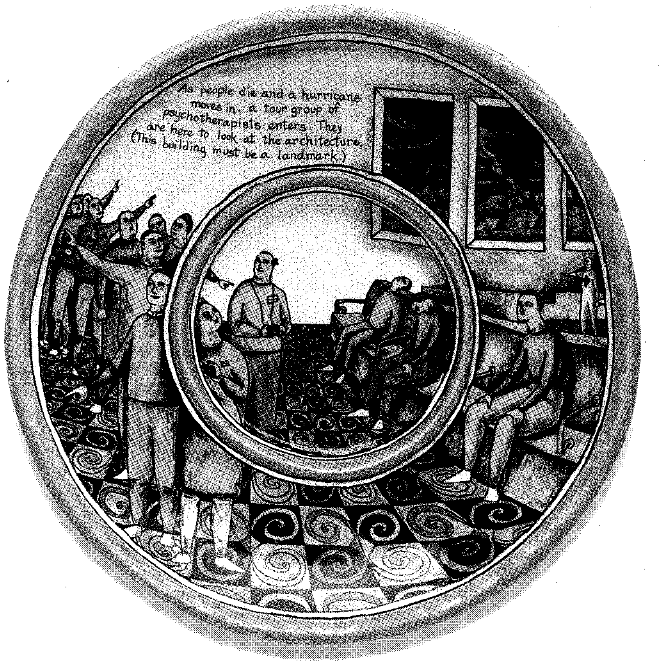
Danny's Skylight Room, 346 W. 46th St. (265-8133)—March 6-8: **Blossom Dearie** sings in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice.

Firebird Café, 363 W. 46th St. (586-0244)—Just because **Yanna Avis** is married to the rental-car magnate who tries harder, you shouldn't assume that hers is strictly a vanity career. As her recording "Easy Come, Easy Go" shows, this Paris-born actress and chanteuse puts across songs with unfussy sincerity and a winning inclination toward contralto sprechstimme. Thanks to her cosmopolitan background, English, Italian, and German numbers fit her almost as neatly as French torch songs; as a result, her programs can be delightfully varied. You'll find nothing cutting-edge here, but if you're hankering to escape to a fifties night club, the Firebird may do the trick while Avis and pianist Colin Romoff are occupying the stage, through March 7.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through March 8: Bassist **Charlie Haden** may have come to prominence as a charter member of Ornette Coleman's famous free-jazz ensembles, but his devotion to the traditional verities trails him like a shadow; for his part, mainstream piano giant **Kenny Barron** has more of a taste for open improvisation than he generally gets credit for (he put in a surprisingly strong appearance as a special guest with—who else?—Ornette Coleman last summer at Lincoln Center). Haden and Barron find common ground exploring the byways of standard tunes, as heard on "Night and the City," their new live album recorded at this club. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Pianist **Mike LeDonne** (in through March 7) knows when to kick off his shoes and when not to. On mid-tempo blues and leisurely ballads, he takes all the time he needs; on bop dashes, he's out of the gate without looking back. With bassist JON WEBBER, a familiar partner.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—March 4-8: ELLIOTT SHARP'S TERRAPLANE. The sonic visionary of the mutant guitar can also play a mean blues when he's in the mood. His feel for the idiom rings true in slide work that's as nasty as it should be. March 6: In his idealist's drive to get back to the basics of rhythm, LEON PARKER has in the past reduced his drum kit to a single cymbal, snare, and tomtom; he's even recorded tunes using only his body as a percussion instrument. All of which would add up to an amusing gimmick if he weren't capable of swinging a band clear off the stage with only a tin cup and one hand tied behind his back (not to give him any ideas).


As people die and a hurricane moves in, a tour group of psychotherapists enters. They are here to look at the architecture. (This building must be a landmark.)

"Mass Suicide Saucer," by Anne Kraus (Clark).

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, Art Deco shrine, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. "RHYTHM ON THE RAINBOW . . . THE HOT HARMONIES OF THE BOSWELL SISTERS," a revue starring Dee Hoty, Sally Mayes, and Nancy Opel. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Hilary Kole. Closed Mondays.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—The TONY CORBISCELLO big band swings up a storm on March 6.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through March 8: With his green-apple tone and his all-seeing vision, saxophonist OLIVER LAKE—minus his usual World Saxophone Quartet—asserts his continuing allegiance to Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman while remaining his own man. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—It shouldn't come as a total shock to find that the trumpeter TOM HARRELL (in with a septet through March 8) dives head first into Latin jazz on his new disk, "The Art of Rhythm." This forthright improviser and long-time Joe Lovano associate worked with the Latin-rock band Azteca back in the seventies and has often ventured into Latin currents since then. If percolating clave or samba rhythms boil over during the course of a set, don't say you weren't warned. The VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Conversion by Candlelight: The Four Magdalens by Georges de la Tour (1593-1652)." Through March 15. . . . ¶ An exhibition at the Costume Institute devoted to the work of Gianni Versace. Through March 22. . . . ¶ "The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part One: Calligraphy." Through June 28. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—The Chuck Close retrospective and "Artists and Subjects: Picasso to Stella" examine the guises of twentieth-century portraiture. Through May 26 and May 25, respectively. . . . ¶ "Alvar Aalto: Between Humanism and Materialism," a centennial exhibition that includes sketches, photographs, and maquettes of architectural projects by the Finnish modernist. Through May 19. . . . ¶ A retrospective of Fernand Léger traces the metamorphoses of the French modernist (1881-1955), from Fauvist to Cubist to Social Realist. Through May 12. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"China: 5,000 Years" is an impressively mounted survey of art in every medium, including some of the country's greatest masterpieces. The exhibition ranges from the Neolithic to the dynastic era and has no particular focus; with works of this quality, however, no one's complaining. One of the most fascinating objects is an earthenware basin from Xi'an, painted with stylized fishes and enigmatic representations of human heads, which dates to the late sixth or the early fifth millennium B.C. China's preoccupation with its own past is a subtle, recurring theme: one of the most exquisite porcelain objects is a Sung-dynasty pot that echoes the shape of an Archaic bronze cauldron. Star power is supplied by four of the famous life-size earthenware warriors, and a magnificent horse, from the tomb of Qin Shihuangdi, discovered in Xi'an in 1977. One gorgeous item comes not from China but from Tibet—a finely detailed silk tapestry, partially gilded, of Budong, one of the Kings of Bright Wisdom, his scarves flying like forks of lightning. Through June 3. . . . ¶ "After 'Mountains and Sea': Frankenthaler 1956-59." The painting that gives its name to the show is celebrated for having signalled the artist's arrival, at the age of twenty-three, as a pioneering color-field abstractionist. In retrospect, it isn't surprising to learn that her technique of staining canvases with diluted, runny paint that melded line and colors was the product of rigorous formal experimentation. Through May 3. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—"China: 5,000 Years." The downtown portion of the museum's retrospective of Chinese art is devoted to modern works, from 1850 to the present. Through May 25. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

When.

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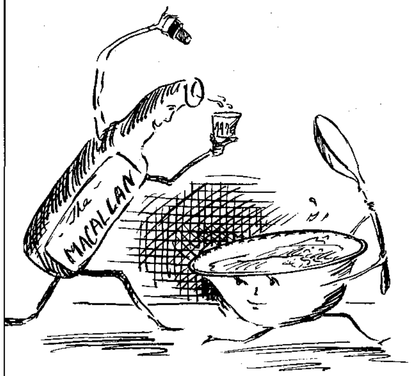

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Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Bill Viola," a mid-career survey devoted to the video artist. Through May 10. . . . ¶ "Arthur Dove: A Retrospective," the first major exhibition in more than twenty years to examine the work of the Empire State abstractionist, who lived in a string of rustic accommodations—a farm, a houseboat, the custodian's quarters of a yacht club, an abandoned post office by a tidal pond—while fashioning quietly resonant, nonfigurative works reflecting his preoccupation with the natural world. Through April 12. . . . ¶ "1948," an excellent small show in the Collection in Context series, curated by Greil Marcus and Elizabeth Sussman. In the short text that accompanies the show, Marcus identifies 1948 as the year in which "the United States began to break apart and reform." Video monitors play loops from the 1948 Democratic Convention, where Hubert Humphrey proposed the first civil-rights plank in the Party's history. The paintings and sculptures support this narrative of anxiety and dissent, but in oblique rather than didactic ways. In the context of the emerging Beat movement, the title of a marvellous Lee Krasner painting, "White Squares," takes on a new connotation. There are also terrific (or, at least, curious) pictures by Hopper, Gottlieb, Reinhardt, and Grosz, as well as Thomas Hart Benton's hilarious and brilliant "Poker Night (From 'A Streetcar Named Desire')." Through March 15. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Scattered Petals, Fallen Leaves, Shards of Glass: The Work of Bing Hu," the latest in the museum's Working in Brooklyn series, presents sculptures—windshield-scrap curtains, glass-bottle chandeliers—that incorporate debris the artist picked up near her Williamsburg studio. Through May 10. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—"Great Cities, Small Treasures" provides a fascinating snapshot of life in some of the world's first urban centers—the cities of the Indus Valley, in modern-day Pakistan. Figurines in terra cotta and bronze from Mohenjo-daro, which carefully delineate the different groups and castes in the ancient city, prove that there was ethnic diversity among its residents even four thousand years ago. Style mattered: a six-strand swath of carnelian beads is so heavy that archeologists aren't sure whether it was a necklace or a belt. The most famous object from the Indus is included—a small steatite bust of somebody known as the Priest-King, whose long, elegant eyes and placid smile bespeak a crisp sense of divine right. Through May 3. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

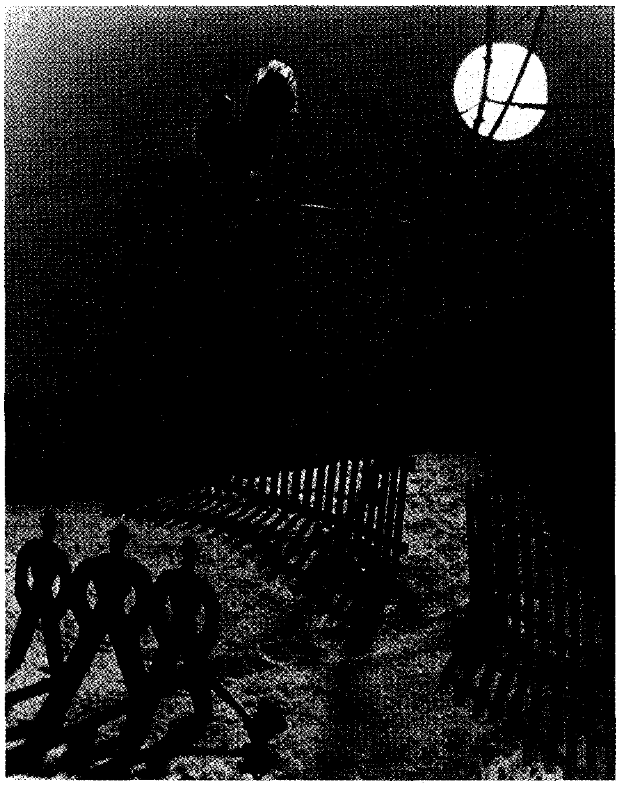
China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181)—"The Scent of Ink," its funky title notwithstanding, is an exhibition of rare taste and beauty, bringing together fifty masterworks of Chinese painting from the collection of Roy and Marilyn Papp. It opens with an exuberant hanging scroll of "The Immortal Lan Caihe Playing a Flute," by Chen Zihe, who was said to have done his best work while drunk. "In Search of Plum Blossoms," a hand scroll by the Ming-dynasty master Wen Nan, is a detailed vision of rustic life, executed in pale shades of green and rose on golden silk. In a series of eight landscapes by the seventeenth-century painter Lan Shen, exquisitely mounted in an album, the brightly colored inks have such sparkling intensity that they might have been applied yesterday. Through June 20. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing, 1960-1980" displays early mimeographed publications of three generations of New York School poets, from Ashbery, Koch, and O'Hara to Berrigan, Padgett, Waldman, Mayer, and Myles. Through July 25. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Jean Fautrier (1898-1964)—"Black Nudes and Other Early Works," a splendid show of a once eminent, then somewhat forgotten, now once again fashionable French painter. Mark Rothko admired Fautrier's nimbuses of thick oil paint—which were not so different in texture from his own—and apparently the neglect that Fautrier's work suffered in this country further discouraged the suicidal Abstract Expressionist. The works in the show are from the twenties, a lesser-known period of the artist's career, which makes it doubly exciting for those interested in this recherché material. Through April 11. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St. 988-1623. Open Mondays.)



An Anton Bruehl photograph for a Fabric Group ad that appeared in these pages in November, 1928. At Greenberg.

© ESTATE OF ANTON BRUEHL

Donald Judd (1928-94)—Early fabricated sculpture from 1965 to 1976 by the pivotal Minimalist. Judd had a reputation as a cold and curmudgeonly sort, but within the severe confines of his reductive art he could manage unexpected sensuousness: for example, an untitled "stacked" piece from 1970, in which the artist combined shiny brass with red fluorescent Plexiglas. Through March 14. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292.)

Anne Kraus—Beautiful ceramic teapots, cups, tiles, and vases, decorated in a bold and carefree Tuscan palette. Each piece contains enigmatic tableaux, dreamy inset scenes that snatches of prose—"Greta came to a halt and recalled a long hallway and the sound of someone crying"—fail to explain. A cagey, complex experience in a fragile medium. Through March 7. (Clark, 24 W. 57th St. 246-2205.)

Short List—**REYNOLDS BEAL,** Beacon Hill Fine Art, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 734-3636. Through March 21. . . . **DAVID BIERK,** Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. 399-5510. Through March 21. . . . **JANET FISH,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through March 7. . . . **SAM FRANCIS,** Gray, 1018 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 472-8787. Through March 31. . . . **MORRIS GRAVES,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through March 28. . . . **MICHAEL HEIZER,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 794-0550. Through March 7. . . . **ELLSWORTH KELLY,** Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. 489-3331. Through March 14. . . . **LOREN MAC IVER,** De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050. Through March 14. . . . **FELICIEN ROPS,** Shepherd, 21 E. 84th St. 861-4050. Through April 25. . . . **VOLKER STELZMANN,** Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545. Through March 28. . . . **ANNE TRUITT,** Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227. Through March 21. . . . **PAUL WALDMAN,** Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888. Through March 28. . . . **WILLIAM ZORACH,** Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Through March 14.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Renée Cox—"Rajé, a Superhero: The Beginning of a Bold New Era," an installation of photomontaged cibachromes clearly in synch with the mood of Quentin Tarantino's "Jackie Brown" and the renewed vogue for seventies blaxploitation movies. Many African-American artists in recent years have perversely celebrated stereotypical racial images. The persona of Rajé is an effervescent, badass blend of Superwoman, Cleopatra Jones, and RuPaul. Through March 28. (Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. 206-0297.)

John Wesley—"Favorite Works," a selection of canvases and works on paper by a Pop artist who never gained quite the fame of his peers but who has always been an eccentric and lively presence on the scene. This show includes works from 1968 to the present, and demonstrates that Wesley is as much of our time as he is of the sixties. Through March 21. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555.)

Short List—**VITO ACCONCI,** Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300. Through April 1. . . . **KEITH EDMIER,** Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100. Through March 7. . . . **JACK FEATHERLY,** Team, 527 W. 26th St. 279-9219. Through March 14. . . . **GRAHAM GILLMORE,** Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. 627-3930. Through March 14. . . . **KEN GRIMES,** Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819. Through March 14. . . . **ROBERT GROSVENOR,** Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Through March 21. . . . **ANNA RUTH HENRIQUES,** Liebman Magnan, 552 W. 24th St. 255-3225. Through March 21. . . . **PELLO IRAZU,** Weber, 529 W. 20th St. 691-5711. Through March 21. . . . **ALAIN KIRILI,** Marlborough, 211 W. 19th St. 463-8634. Through March 28. . . . **JOSEPH LOGAN,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through March 28. . . . **MATTHEW MC CASLIN,** Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500. Through March 7. . . . **PATTY MARTORI,** D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 352-9460. Through March 14. . . . **THOMAS RUFF,** 303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Through March 28. . . . **PETER SARKISIAN,** I-20 Gallery, 529 W. 20th St. 645-1100. Through April 4.

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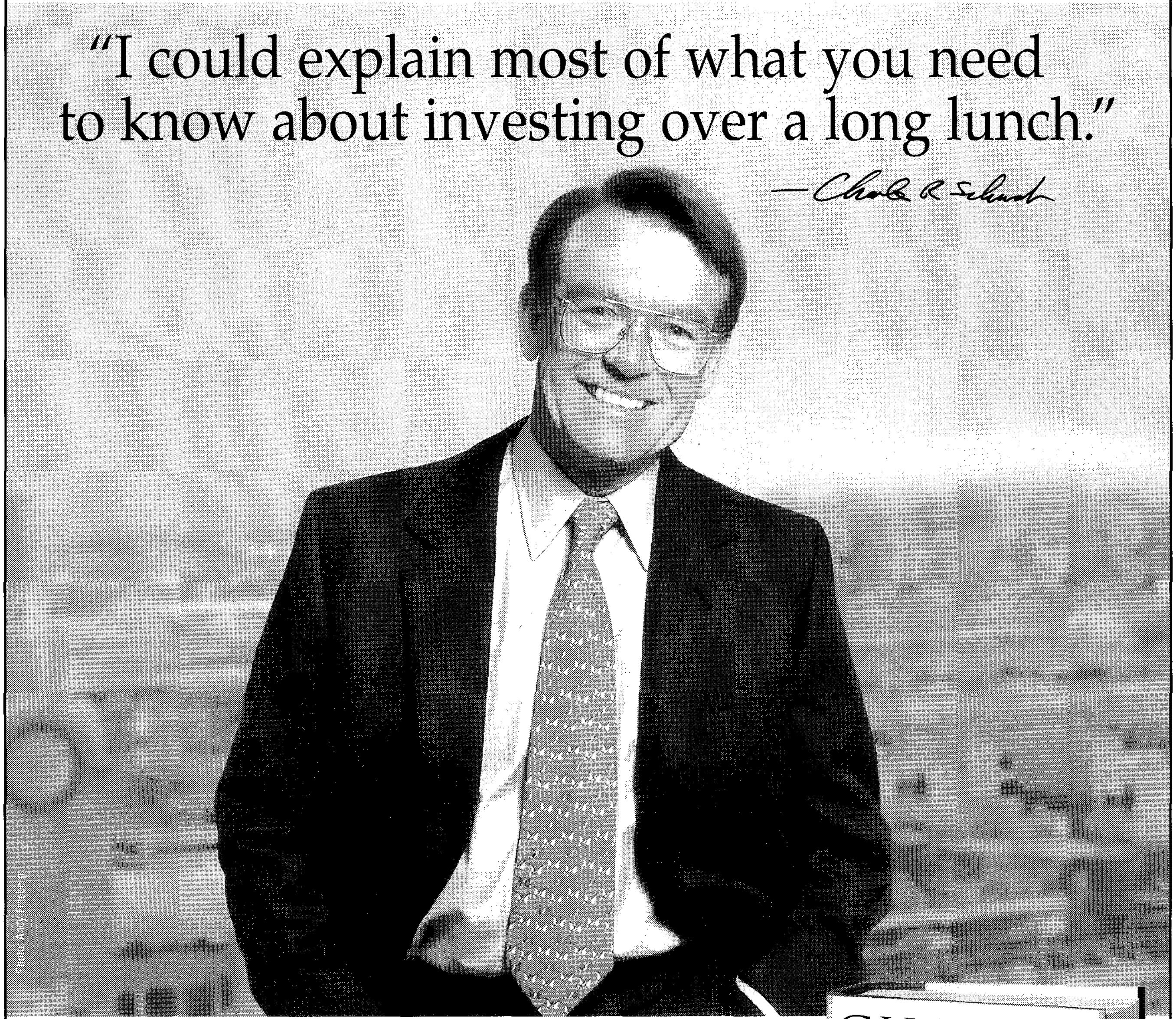

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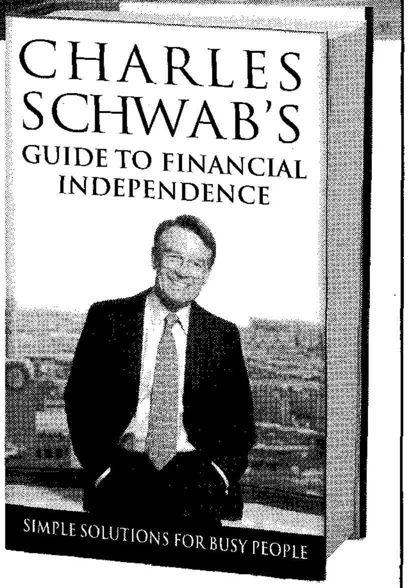
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GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Irene Hardwicke—A lovely, lovelorn, hymeneal show of oils on wood. The artist has covered the bodies of her pale and naked brides with magical botanical specimens and with folk wisdom and Biblical quotations in print so small that getting close enough to read them feels as intimate as kissing. Through March 30. (Bodell, 13 E. 7th St. 477-1820.)

Werner Hoeflich—"Below the Surface," a series of accomplished abstract paintings that will give connoisseurs of the modernist brushstroke much to admire. In some of this young artist's most successful pictures, evenly spaced, utterly flat stripes alternate with vaporous, drizzly washes and skeins of paint, suggesting a marriage of Frank Stella and Helen Frankenthaler—and, as unlikely as that sounds, it works. Through March 7. (Davies, 23 Commerce St. 243-6840.)

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)—"Blackboard Drawing, 1919-24," an unusual and rewarding exhibition devoted to the theosophist and educator. One of Steiner's colleagues got the idea of preserving some of the master's explanatory lecture sketches by placing black paper over the blackboards. Steiner didn't consider the results works of art, nor apparently did such contemporaries as Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Jawlensky, all of whom attended the lectures and were, to varying degrees, taken with the ideas. But in light of more recent "blackboard" art by Joseph Beuys and Cy Twombly, Steiner's preserved ephemera certainly do have a prescient look. Through March 21. (Blum, 99 Wooster St. 343-0441.)

Short List—**MICHAEL ASHKIN,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. 941-0203. Through March 21. . . .**CHRISTOPHER BUCKLOW,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219. Through March 14. . . .**ELIZABETH CATLETT,** June Kelly, 591 Broadway. 226-1660. Through March 4. . . .**GEORGE CONDO,** Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. 431-9224. Through March 7. . . .**PETER DREHER,** Knowlton, 568 Broadway. 966-2625. Through March 7. . . .**FENG MENGBO,** Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777. Through March 21. . . .**DAN FLAVIN,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway. 431-5160. Through March 14. . . .**JANE HAMMOND,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. 219-2863. Through March 21. . . .**GILLIAN JAGGER,** Kind, 136 Greene St. 925-1200. Through March 28. . . .**MICHAEL LAZARUS,** Feature, 76 Greene St. 941-7077. Through March 28. . . .**SARAH LEAHY,** Foster, 62 Crosby St. 966-9024. Through March 7. . . .**ANISSA MACK,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. 941-5711. Through March 21. . . .**RUTHARD MIKSCH,** Au Base, 433 W. 14th St. 414-0563. Through March 28. . . .**ROBERT MOSKOWITZ,** Markey, 55 Vandam St. 627-4446. Through March 21. . . .**ELIZABETH OLBERT,** Golden, 39 Wooster St. 274-0080. Through April 4. . . .**EDGAR SÁNCHEZ,** Perlow, 560 Broadway. 941-1220. Through March 5. . . .**KENNY SCHARF,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300. Through March 14. . . .**BONELL SILVERMAN,** Steele, 420 West Broadway. 941-8388. Through March 21. . . .**CINDY TOWERS,** Trans Hudson, 416 W. 13th St. 242-3232. Through March 14.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

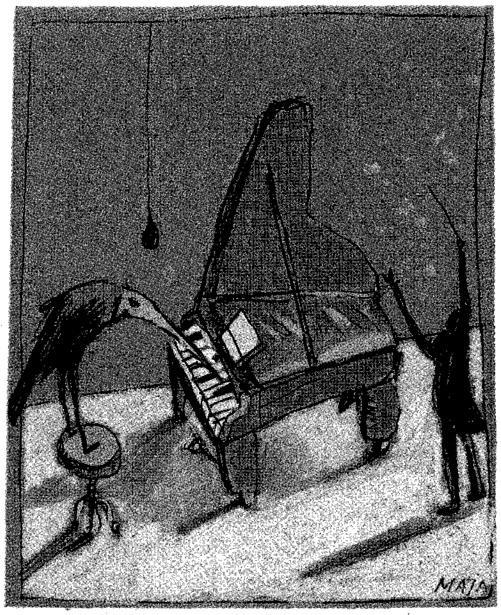
Sotheby's—March 6-7: A two-day sale of prints, including seventeen Toulouse-Lautrec lithographs from the estate of Burgess Meredith. . . . ¶ March 9: Watches. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Christie's—An auction of fine watches. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000. March 10.)

Phillips—A sale of the contents of a New Jersey Victorian mansion, including an especially striking, profusely inlaid billiard table in the Aesthetic style. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830. March 10.)

Works on Paper—An essential annual gathering for collectors of prints, drawings, watercolors, and photography. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. March 6-8, with a benefit preview on March 5. For information, call 472-1180.)

Cleaning Out the Cellar—Maxim's, the legendary Parisian restaurant, realized last year that it had accumulated far more wine than even its dependable clientele could ever swallow, and selected nearly seven hundred lots to sell at auction in France. Apparently the cellar-cleaning urge has stuck, but this year it's the Americans who get to attend the proceedings, in a daylong auction, co-sponsored by Morrell & Company, entirely devoted to choice—even historic—Bordeaux and Burgundies that have been shipped for the occasion to the restaurant's New York branch. (Maxim's, 680 Madison Ave. March 7. For information, call 307-4200.)



Da Camera of Houston explores the music of Surrealism, at the Walter Reade Theatre.

DANIEL MAJA

PHOTOGRAPHY

Anton Bruehl (1900-82)—Vintage prints by a master magazine and advertising photographer whose black-and-white and color work filled the pages of the Condé Nast magazines in the thirties and forties. Bruehl's commercial output was strikingly good-looking and fashionable, even if it was sometimes a bit too ripe. But the pleasant surprise here is that his early industrial views (gas tanks, the skylights of Pennsylvania Station) and portraits of children in Mexico were just as strong and even more lucid for their lack of embellishment. Through March 7. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.)

Rose Marasco—"New England Diary," photographs of items the artist has collected over the years along the rural byways of the Northeast. Some form series, such as six images of the fronts and backs of homemade button cards, or a dozen shots of colorful aprons. Others depict domestic items—a rolling pin, an ironing board—out of doors, at the edge of a marsh or the ocean. The most affecting works recontextualize old photographs: one picture, of a woman named Florence Burrill Jacobs (whose diary the artist also found), is elegantly surrounded by a carpet of umber grape leaves, rhyming with the image of the young woman sitting in a doorway overgrown with grapevines. Through March 7. (Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., between 23rd and 24th Sts. 242-7767.)

David (Chim) Seymour (1911-56)—Images of children predominate in this affecting selection of prints by the renowned photojournalist. Through March 7. (Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292.)

Burk Uzzle / Micha Bar-Am—"Daytona Bike Week," a thirty-year look at the tattooed Florida subculture. / A small, powerful selection of social observations and unflinching war reportage by the Israeli photojournalist. (In conjunction with the retrospective at the International Center of Photography.) Both shows through March 14. (Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon.)

"Flashback: The Fifties"—Elvis Presley, hula hoops, home economics: this giddy black-and-white survey of postwar America has it all. The burlesque queen Lily St. Cyr darns her pasties in a dark interior by Garry Winogrand; Jackson Pollock drips away directly beneath a stage shot of Bill Haley and His Comets rocking away; Billie Holiday glows in a dark gem by Roy DeCarava. Although several famous images by Robert Frank and William Klein anchor the selections, the show is beautifully modulated by lesser-known works, including two comic-book-reading boys by Benn Mitchell and a stark look at school segregation by Arthur Rickerby. Through March 7. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

"Italy: Four Artists, Three Journeys"—Recent work by Angelo Lomeo, Sonja Bullaty, Linda Butler, and Leonard Sussman. Through March 14. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510.)

International Center of Photography—"Micha Bar-Am: An Israeli Photobiography." (See listing above.) Through May 31. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown—Come one, come all, to "Weegee's World: Life, Death and the Human Drama." This two-hundred-picture extravaganza spans the tabloid Daumier's long love affair with the Big Apple; whether his unsparing lens happens upon lovers in the Village, nabobs at the opera, or stiffs on the sidewalk. Most of the pictures are familiar, but there are many less iconic shots that offer surprising, salty tastes of nocturnal Gotham. Through March 8. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Group Show—A gathering of more than fifty works by eleven photographers of Cuban origin, including Consuelo Castañeda, Maria Martinez-Cañas, Abelardo Morell, and Manuel Piña. Through April 2. (Generous Miracles, 529 W. 20th St. 352-2858.)

Short List—**ANDREW BUSH,** Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Through April 4. . . .**PETER GARFIELD,** Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500. Through March 7. . . .**LOIS GUARINO,** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223. Through March 14. . . .**JINDRICH HEISLER,** Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. 794-4444. Through April 4. . . .**CRAIG KALPAKJIAN,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through March 28. . . .**JAN LUKAS,** Czech Center New York, 1109 Madison Ave., at 83rd St. 288-0830. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 to 5; through March 18. . . .**LUIS MALLO,** Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819. Through March 14. . . .**WAYNE F. MILLER,** De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. 327-1482. Through March 14. . . .**MARTA MARIA PEREZ BRAVO,** Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059. Through March 15. . . .**FLORIO PUENTER,** Baron/Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. 581-9191. Through March 28. . . .**ROBERTO SCHEZEN,** Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070. Through March 14. . . .**KIKI SMITH** and **JOEY KÖTTING,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Both shows through March 7. . . .**PAUL STRAND,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through April 4. . . .**KARL STRUSS,** Danziger, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. 734-5300. Through March 28. . . .**SUSAN UNTERBERG,** Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255. Through April 4. . . .**JEFF WALL,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Open Mondays; through March 14. . . .**JOCKO WEYLAND,** Martz, 524 W. 20th St. 206-3686. Through March 14. . . .**ERNEST WITHERS,** Kasher, 54 North Moore St. 966-3978. Closed Tuesdays, opens at noon; through March 14.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050, and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—SAMSON ET DALILA, with Denyce Graves, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus; conducted by Leonard Slatkin. (March 4 at 8.) . . . With Frederick Burchinal instead of Mr. Leiferkus. (March 7 at 8.) . . . With Ms. Graves, Mark Baker, and Mr. Burchinal; Mr. Slatkin. (March 10 at 8.) . . . L'ELISIR D'AMORE, with Youngok Shin, Frank Lopardo, Roberto de Candia, and Paul Plishka; Maurizio Benini. (March 5 at 7:30.) . . . LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN, with Sumi Jo, Patricia Racette, Victoria Livengood, Susanne Mentzer, Richard Leech, and James Morris; Simone Young. (March 6 at 8.) . . . MADAMA BUTTERFLY, with Catherine Malfitano, Wendy White, Franco Farina, and Alan Opie; Carlo Rizzi. (March 7 at 1:30.) . . . The opening performance of a new production of LOHENGRIN, with Deborah Voigt, Deborah Polaski, Ben Heppner, Hans-Joachim Ketelsen, and Eric Halfvarson; James Levine. (March 9 at 6:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—The company's spring season opens this week and continues through April 26. LA BOHÈME. (March 6 at 8 and March 7 at 1:30.) . . . LE NOZZE DI FIGARO. (March 7 at 8.) . . . MADAMA BUTTERFLY. (March 8 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Yuri Temirkanov conducts Mussorgsky's Prelude to “Khovanshchina,” Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 (featuring the orchestra's concertmaster, Glenn Dicterow), and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. March 5 and March 7 at 8 and March 6 at 11 A.M.)

New York Virtuosi Chamber Symphony—The ensemble performs Poulenc's “L'Histoire de Babar” (after Jean de Brunhoff's children's books, narrated by Werner Klemperer), Bloch's Concerto Grosso No. 1 (with pianist Gerald Robbins), the première of Michael Levine's “Divination by Mirror” (with soloist Dale Stuckenbruck, playing the musical saw), and Britten's “Simple Symphony.” Kenneth Klein conducts. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. March 4 at 8.)

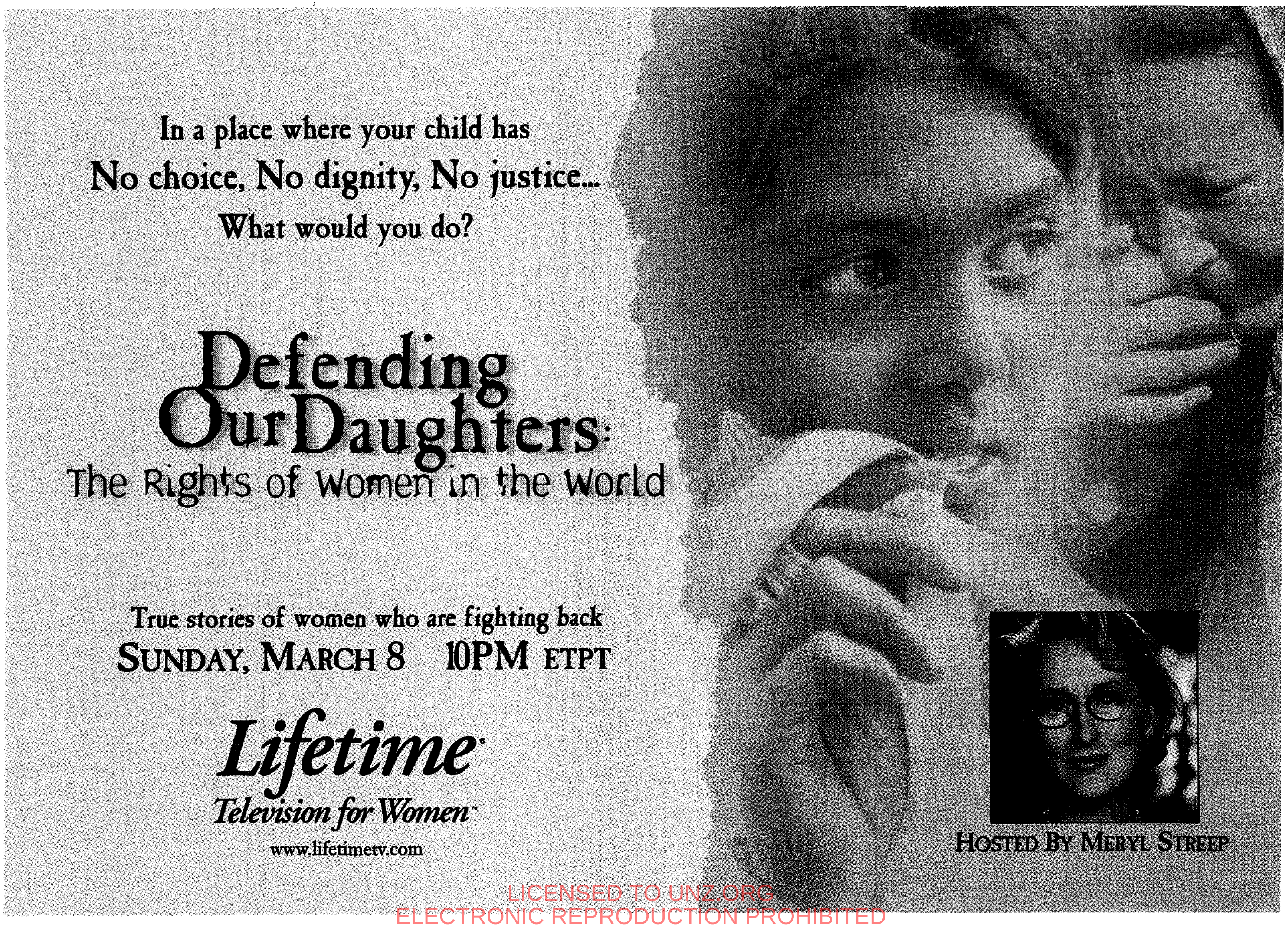
“Sonidos de las Américas”—Concluding concerts of the American Composers Orchestra's annual exploration of the music of our hemisphere, which this year focusses on Argentinean music. March 4 at 8: The A.C.O. Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Paul Lustig Dunkel and Tania León, performs works by Maximo Flügelman (his “Concerto Breve,” with pianist Mirian Conti), Osvaldo Golijov, Jorge Liderman, María Cecilia Villanueva, and Julio Martín Viera. (Weill Recital Hall.) . . . ¶ March 5 at 8: Los Tangueros, with pianists Pablo Ziegler and Christopher O'Riley, perform tangos by Astor Piazzolla and Mr. Ziegler. (Thalia Spanish Theatre, 4117 Greenpoint Ave., Sunnyside, Queens. For information about tickets, call 718-729-3880.) . . . ¶ March 6 at 8: Mr. Dunkel leads the A.C.O. Chamber Orchestra in works by Piazzolla, Ziegler, Alicia Terzian, Eduardo Alonso-Crespo, Pablo Ortiz, and Gerardo Gandini; with Mr. Ziegler, Mr. O'Riley, and Los Tangueros. (Weill Recital Hall.) . . . ¶ March 7 at 3: Orquesta Nova offers a program of “nuevo tango,” jazz, and chamber music. (Jamaica Arts Center, 161-04 Jamaica Ave., Queens. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ March 7 at 8: The New York Tango Trio. (Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St., between Avenues B and C. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ March 8 at 3: Dennis Russell Davies leads Piazzolla's Concerto for Bandoneon and Orchestra, with the American Composers Orchestra and soloist Raúl Juarena (who will have played the same work two days earlier, with the Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra), as well as pieces by Marta Lambertini, Lalo Schifrin (a première), Carlos Calleja, and Ginastera. (Carnegie Hall.)

Houston Symphony—Christoph Eschenbach conducts Dvořák's “Carnival” Overture, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Tzimon Barto), and Stravinsky's “Le Sacre du Printemps.” (Carnegie Hall. March 5 at 8.)

Bronx Arts Ensemble Orchestra—Fans of Astor Piazzolla (which seems to be just about everybody these days) must make a difficult choice between this and the “Sonidos de las Américas” concert; in this, the estimable Uruguayan pianist and conductor Pablo Zinger leads an all-Piazzolla program that features Raúl Juarena in the Bandoneon Concerto. (By the way, if you ask an Uruguayan about the origins of tango, you should not be surprised if Montevideo is mentioned before Buenos Aires.) (Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture, 450 Grand Concourse, at 149th St., the Bronx. March 6 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 718-601-7399.)

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra—The conductorless ensemble offers Mendelssohn's “Die Schöne Melusine” Overture, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 (with Bruno Leonardo Gelber), David Rakowski's “Persistent Memory” (a première), and Dvořák's “Czech Suite” (Op. 39). (Carnegie Hall. March 7 at 8.)

I Cantori di New York—Last year, this forty-voice choir, directed by Mark Shapiro, received the ASCAP/Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming; this year, it's upholding its reputation in an imaginative series that mixes familiar works with worthwhile discoveries. This program offers two well-known works—Poulenc's “Four Lenten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Motets" and Vaughan Williams's Mass in G Major—as well as relative curiosities: Krenek's "Die Jahreszeiten," Alain Gagnon's "Chansons d'Orient," and Szymanowski's "Szesc Piesni Ludowych." (Calvary Episcopal Church, Park Ave. S. at 21st St. March 7 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

Dessoff Choirs—Kent Tritle directs pieces by Paul Moravec (the première of his "Songs of Love and War," with baritone David Arnold as soloist), Robert Convery, Morton Lauridsen, and Chris DeBlasio. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. March 8 at 3.)

RECITALS

Chamber Music at the Y—A concert comprising Rossini's Sonata No. 1 for Two Violins, Cello, and Double Bass; Mendelssohn's D-Major Sextet; and Schubert's "Trout" Quintet. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. March 4 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Presenting Schubert's A-Major Rondo for Violin and Piano, several songs by Schubert and Schumann, excerpts from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" (arranged for violin and piano), and Brahms's G-Minor Piano Quartet. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. March 5 at 7:30 and March 8 at 4.)

Musicians from Marlboro—Young musicians affiliated with Vermont's Marlboro Music Center offer Vítězslav Novák's Piano Quartet, Ravel's Sonata for Violin and Cello, and Dvořák's Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major (Op. 87). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 5 at 8.)

Bach-Watching—All great cellists seem to end up obsessing over Bach's Unaccompanied Suites, the Himalayas of the repertoire. Yo-Yo Ma's fascination has taken an unusual turn. After years of performing them solo, he invited colleagues in other disciplines to reinterpret Bach's six pieces in different media. The results will be shown in six hour-long films to be screened on three successive days, March 6-8. (The lineup is the same each day.) At 2: Suite No. 1, featuring a garden designed by Julie Moir Messervy, and Suite No. 2, played with a film by François Girard about the architecture of Piranesi. . . . ¶ At 5: Suite No. 3, with the Mark Morris Dance Group, and Suite No. 4, with a conceptual film by the writer and director Atom Egoyan. . . . ¶ At 8: Suite No. 5, with Kabuki artist Tamasaburo Bando, and Suite No. 6, with ice dancers Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. 875-5600.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Presenting the Orion String Quartet, French hornist Robert Routch, and pianist Peter Serkin, in a program that comprises Mozart's Horn Quintet, Beethoven's F-Major String Quartet (Op. 135), and Dvořák's A-Major Piano Quintet (Op. 81). (Alice Tully Hall. March 6 at 8 and March 8 at 5.)

Guarneri Quartet—The foursome continues its season-long survey of Beethoven's string quartets by performing those in E-Flat Major (Op. 74, the "Harp"), B-Flat Major (Op. 18, No. 6), and E Minor (Op. 59, No. 2). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 7 at 8.)

Bang on a Can All-Stars—The modern-music group presents the concert première of Brian Eno's environmental work "Music for Airports," along with other pieces. (Alice Tully Hall. March 7 at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—The instrumentalists, assisted by pianist Diane Walsh, offer Giovanni Bottesini's Grand Duo Concertant (for violin, double-bass, and piano), Beethoven's C-Minor String Trio (Op. 9, No. 3), and Schubert's "Trout" Quintet. (Cantor Auditorium, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. March 8 at 2. For information about tickets, call 212-840-7470.)

Michael Schade and Russell Braun—The tenor and the baritone, assisted by pianist Carolyn Maule, offer a wide-ranging recital of songs and duets, including works by Mozart, Schubert, and Fauré. (Alice Tully Hall. March 8 at 2.)

Pomerium—Alexander Blachly directs the fourteen-voice chamber choir in opulent works written for papal chapels of Julius II, Leo X, and Clement VII, who employed many of the finest composers of Europe. This concert of Masses, Magnificats, and motets includes works by such early-sixteenth-century masters as Josquin des Prés, Alexander Agricola, Jean Mouton, Pierre de la Rue, and Constanzo Festa. Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-9266. March 8 at 4.)

Da Camera of Houston—The enterprising chamber group explores ways in which music resonated with the Surrealist movement of Paris in the twenties. The evening includes Antheil's "La Femme 100 Têtes" (inspired by Max Ernst's collage-novel) and Poulenc's song cycle "Le Bal Masqué" (to texts by Max Jacob, with baritone William Sharp). Also on the program are readings from Picasso's play "Desire Caught by the Tail" and a screening of René Clair's film "Entr'acte," for which pianists Sarah Rothenberg and Pedja Muzijevic will perform a score by Satie. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. March 9 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Performing Beethoven's Quartets in D Major (Op. 18, No. 3) and C Major (Op. 59, No. 3), as well as Berg's String Quartet. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 10 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Show Me the Fabulousness—More than a hundred dealers of memorabilia from the nineteen-sixties bring their wares to the Sixties Show at the 69th Regiment Armory, offering the chance to take home such cultural totems as vintage clothes by Pucci, Gucci, and Halston, Fillmore West posters, Peter Max plates, and space-age furniture. Scheduled to perform are Paul Kantner and Jack Casady of Jefferson Starship, Erin Murphy (Tabitha, on "Bewitched"), Mark Goddard (Don West, on "Lost in Space"), and other celebrities from the Age of Aquarius. (Lexington Ave. at 25th St. March 6-8. For more information, call 255-0020.)

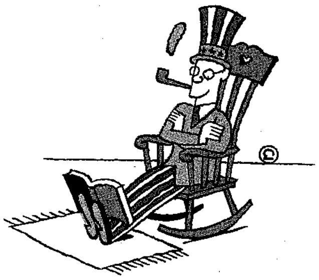
Readings—March 5 at 7: Billy Collins, Ann Lauterbach, Walter Mosley, Sharon Olds, and other poets and writers read the work of William Matthews, in a tribute to the late poet, who died last November. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ March 6 at 7: By Amiri Baraka and Jayne Cortez, from their poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ March 8 at 5: By Karen Yamashita, from her novel "The Tropic of Orange." (Tribes Gallery, 285 E. 3rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ March 10 at 7:30: By George Plimpton, from his new oral biography of Truman Capote. (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—March 4 at 7: Following a screening of "Hill 24 Doesn't Answer," Thorold Dickinson's 1954 film about the Israeli war of independence, Stuart Schoffman, arts editor of *Jerusalem Report*, discusses the founding of Israel. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 355-6160.) . . . ¶ March 5 at 6: New School communications professor Richard Carter interviews Al Sharpton on the loaded subject of the media and race relations. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 229-5488.) . . . ¶ March 7 at 8: The social critic Barbara Ehrenreich ("Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War") considers why nations go to battle. Presented by the War Resisters League. (399 Washington St., Apt. 3. For more information, call 228-0450.) . . . ¶ March 9 at 8: E. L. Doctorow reads from his novel "Ragtime" and talks with the folks who turned it into a musical—producer Garth Drabinsky and director Frank Galati. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Public Lives

Not all readers are willing to suspend their preconceptions for the duration of a political biography. A few years ago, after Robert Dallek published **Lone Star Rising** (Oxford), the first volume of his massive biography of Lyndon Johnson, he found himself in San Antonio promoting the book. An elderly man with a cane who had been eying the author hobbled over and announced, "I wouldn't pay a goddam nickel to read about that son of a bitch." Dallek says he still wonders if the man knew that the Medicare benefits he likely received were thanks to L.B.J.


EVER MEULEN

Such are the ironies encountered by a political biographer. **Flawed Giant** (Oxford), the second and concluding volume of Dallek's biography, comes out at the end of this month, and the author, who is a professor of history at Boston University, recently outlined the elements he feels are essential to a good political bio. "It should reconstruct the facts as accurately as possible," he says, and, as such, it should avoid polemic. "The compelling need is to present the debates of the time, but to line yourself up on one side or the other I think violates the biographer's canon." An engaging narrative is also necessary. "I'm afraid that's something academic historians have forsaken," Dallek says.

Among the books that Dallek believes fit his criteria are Ronald Steel's **Walter Lippmann and the American Century** (Random House), a biography of the deeply influential political journalist, and William Manchester's **American Caesar** (Dell), an admirably complex account of the life of General Douglas MacArthur. And Joseph Ellis's **American Sphinx** (Knopf), Dallek says, is "a brief but brilliant interpretive analysis of the positive and negative myths about Thomas Jefferson."

Above all, Dallek values a biographer's powers of perception. In **Lincoln** (Simon & Schuster), David Herbert Donald captured the Pulitzer Prize by being "able to penetrate the subtleties of Lincoln's political genius—he was partly an actor and partly a creator of myth—and see the man as he really was." It's just such an ability that, in the end, Dallek's irate San Antonio pundit may have shared.

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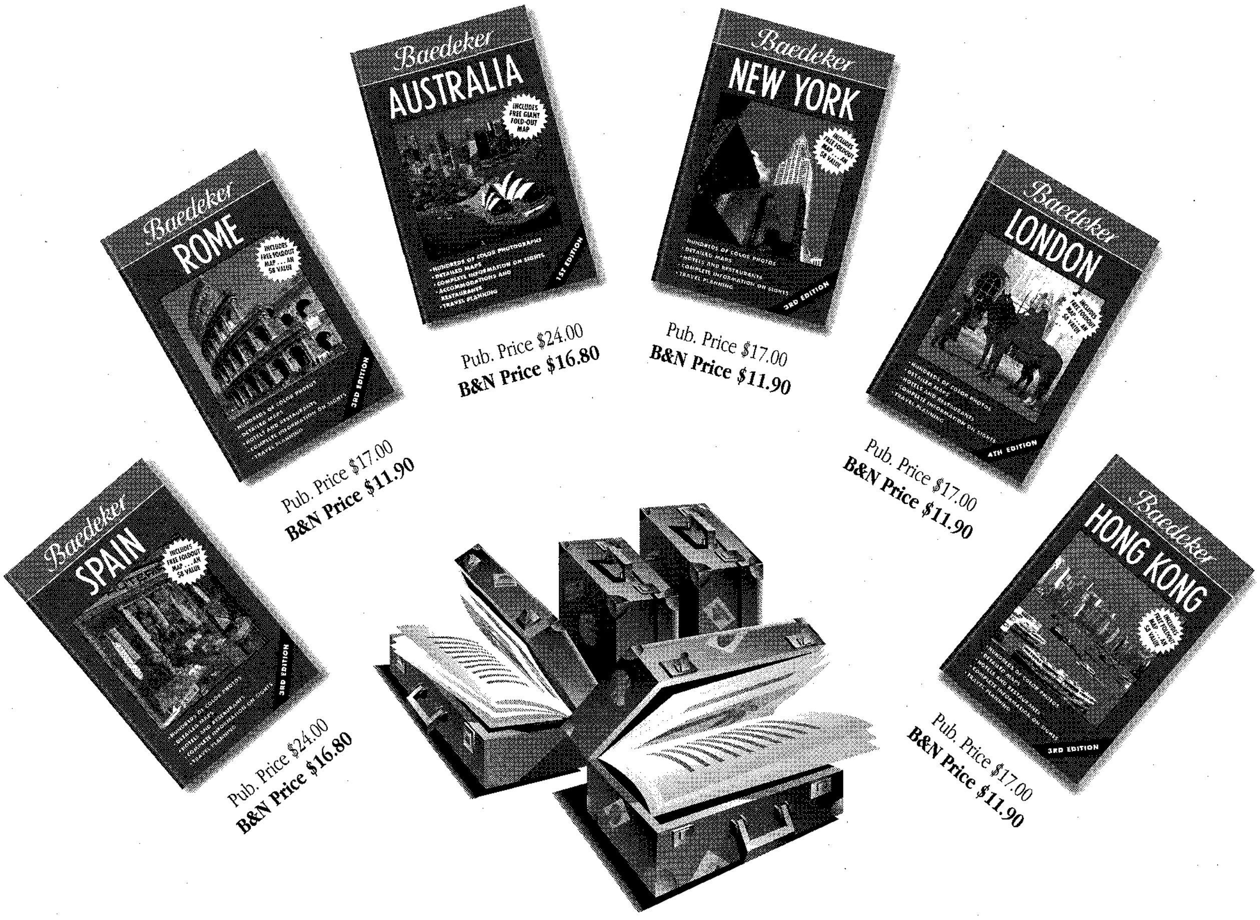
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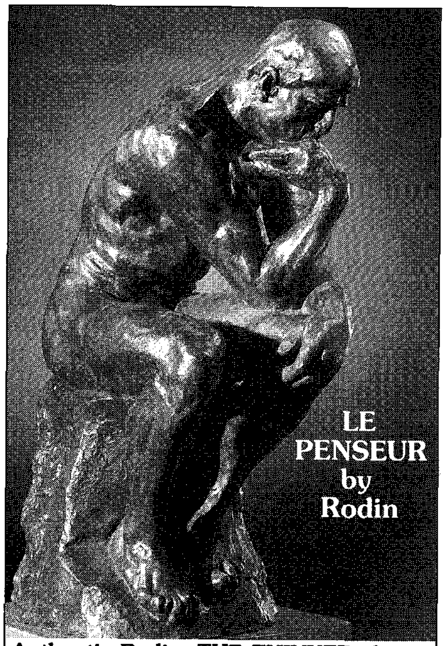

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THE MOVIES

OPENINGS

The Big Lebowski—A comedy from the writer-director team of Joel and Ethan Coen about mistaken identity and a million-dollar kidnapping. With Jeff Bridges, John Goodman, Julianne Moore, and Steve Buscemi. Opening March 6. (Beekman, Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

Hush—A thriller involving a young bride (Gwyneth Paltrow), her husband (Johnathon Schaech), and his possessive mother (Jessica Lange). Directed by Jonathan Darby. Opening March 6. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Leading Man—Jon Bon Jovi plays an American film actor who joins a London theatre company, in a dark comedy written by Virginia Duigan and directed by John Duigan. Opening March 6. (Village East Cinemas.)

Love and Death on Long Island—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening March 6. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Men with Guns—John Sayles's film follows a Latin-American doctor as he looks for seven of his former students who have gone to work in remote villages. In Spanish and Indian languages. Opening March 6. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Paralyzing Fear: The Story of Polio in America—A documentary written and directed by Nina Gilden Seavey. March 4-10. (Film Forum.)

A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies—A documentary. Opening March 6. (Gotham Cinema.)

The Sadness of Sex—Peta Wilson is the girl that writer-performance artist Barry Yourgrau dreams of, in fifteen short stories taken from his book of the same name. Co-written and directed by Rupert Wainwright. Opening March 6. (Quad Cinema.)

Shampoo Horns—Manuel Toledano's look at the night life of Manhattan club kids, and at the murder that one of them committed. Opening March 6. (Quad Cinema.)

Twilight—A Los Angeles murder mystery directed and co-written (with Richard Russo) by Robert Benton, and starring Paul Newman, Susan Sarandon, and Gene Hackman. Opening March 6. (East 85th Street.)

U.S. Marshals—Marshal Sam Gerard (Tommy Lee Jones) and his partner (Robert Downey, Jr.) go after a fugitive assassin (Wesley Snipes) in a chase thriller directed by Stuart Baird. Opening March 6. (Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Afterglow—Julie Christie stars in the improbable role of a former B-movie actress married to a small-time handyman (Nick Nolte) who dabbles big-time in infidelity. He gets involved with a fetching young thing (Lara Flynn Boyle) married to a career-obsessed yuppie (Jonny Lee Miller), and the yuppie picks up Christie at a hotel bar; all manner of droll carryings-on ensue. Written and directed by Alan Rudolph, who can't seem to decide whether the film is a highly stylized French farce or a Pinteresque drama of disconnection.—*Daphne Merkin* (1/19/98) (Regency.)

The Apostle—Produced, written, and directed by its star, Robert Duvall, this film addresses without condescension or glibness a subject—religious conviction—that Hollywood generally caricatures. Duvall plays Sonny, a charismatic Pentecostal preacher on the run from the police. Duvall's performance is so passionate, so energized, that it's almost eerie: is Sonny acting him or is he acting Sonny? The supporting players include Farrah Fawcett, John Beasley, June Carter Cash, Miranda Richardson, and Billy Bob Thornton.—*D.M.* (2/2/98) (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Village Theatre VII.)

As Good as It Gets—A romantic comedy directed and co-written (with Mark Andrus) by James L. Brooks, in which an improbable trio overcomes a heap of troubles and finds collective happiness, sitcom style. Jack Nicholson stars as a romance novelist with a seriously alienating manner, Helen Hunt is a waitress with a young son who has a life-threatening disease, and Greg Kinnear is a gay painter with a sweet smile and no visible erotic attachments. You keep expecting to hear a laugh track.—*D.M.* (1/5/98) (Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Borrowers—It's surprising that filmmakers have only recently latched onto Mary Norton's endearing tales of the Borrowers—miniature humans, six inches high, who live under floorboards and behind wainscots of English houses. On the other hand, it takes the latest technology to do them justice: witness the scene, early in Peter Hewitt's movie, when Pod (Jim Broadbent), the gallant head of a Borrower family, springs around a full-sized kitchen and lands in the ice dispenser. Hewitt wraps the family in a slice of overheated hokum, involving a ravenous villain (John Goodman) and a pest exterminator, but violent slapstick and low scatological gags seem way out of place here; the Borrowers are most entertaining, and most true to themselves, when they are simply hanging out, dining off a single pea or hiding among the toy soldiers in a child's bedroom. They move from a dusky English cottage to a neat suburban street, but behind them looms a surreal cityscape that suggests an H. G. Wells fantasy of the future. Small world, huh?—*Anthony Lane* (Chelsea Cinemas and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Day for Night (1973)—François Truffaut made this tribute to the conventional movies that once gave him pleasure, and apparently still did. He himself plays a director who is shooting an American-financed film called "Meet Pamela," with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jacqueline Bisset, and Valentina Cortese. "Day for Night," unfortunately ordinary in its approach to character, is very childlike—filled with a deeply innocent love of the magic of moviemaking. There's not much to it, though it's graceful. In French.—*Pauline Kael* (Symphony Space; March 10.)

The Full Monty—An amiable light comedy, directed by Peter Cattaneo, about six unemployed British steelworkers who mount an all-male strip show for cash. The script, by Simon Beaufoy, is clean and well developed. Each character is given his bit to do, and when the motley crew comes together the actors all work wonderfully with one another, finding a sexy, warm performance rhythm as they gyrate to some classic seventies disco. Two actors—Mark Addy, who plays an overweight, insecure worker, and Robert Carlyle, as the ringleader—are sensational.—*Bruce Diones* (Art Greenwich Twin, Olympia, and Sutton.)

Good Will Hunting—Matt Damon plays a belligerent working-class genius from South Boston who's been abused in foster homes and is now being given a chance to triumph over his past; Robin Williams is the maverick shrink who helps him understand his demons, and Minnie Driver is the unsnobbish Harvard girlfriend who tries to heal him with acceptance. If it sounds treacly, it's not, thanks to a honed script (co-written by Damon and Ben Affleck, who plays Damon's best pal), subtle performances, and surprisingly warm direction by Gus Van Sant.—*D.M.* (1/19/98) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, and State.)

Great Expectations—Don't have any. This update of Dickens—the Pip character grows up to be a celebrity artist in the Big Apple—has to be one of the most ludicrously dumbed-down versions of a classic in years. But it does have a hip, hybrid soundtrack, and, as directed by Alfonso Cuarón (“A Little Princess”), it's so visually stunning that it's almost gripping in its incoherence. With Ethan Hawke, Gwyneth Paltrow (gorgeously underdressed), Robert De Niro, and Anne Bancroft (two parts Melina Mercouri, one part Carol Channing).—*D.M.* (Chelsea Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, and Ziegfeld.)

The Grim Reaper (1962)—In Bernardo Bertolucci's début film, based on a Pasolini story of the Roman lower depths, the precocious, twenty-two-year-old director hit on his own style of poetic realism. The police find the body of a streetwalker near the Tiber River. One by one, investigators question five suspects: a petty thief; a pseudo-suave ex-con; a hick soldier; a nervous teen-age boy; and a cool blond fellow from the North, who wears telltale wooden clogs. In the vaguely “Rashomon”-like narrative, Bertolucci shows how their stories intersect and how reality differs from their alibis. He swings his camera into these busted lives with a lilting intimacy. The best section has an extraordinary combination of low-key humor and heartbreak, encapsulating a teen-age friendship in a twenty-four-hour time span. Bertolucci, Pasolini, and Sergio Citti wrote the script. In Italian.—*Michael Sragow* (Museum of Modern Art; March 5 and March 8.)

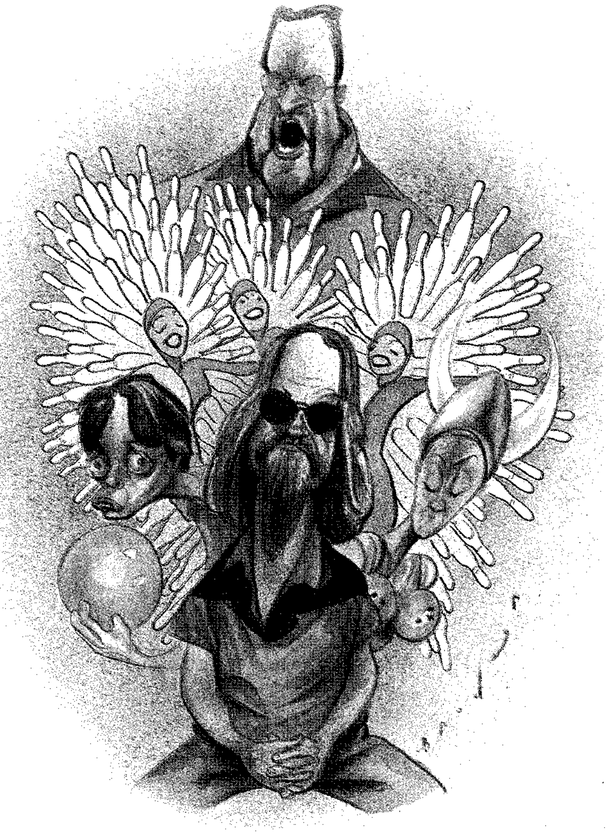
Harakiri (1962)—Feudal Japan is at peace, and starving out-of-work samurai beg to perform ritual suicide at the mansions of powerful clans—a request they hope will lead to a charitable pittance or a menial job. When one of them is forced to go through with harakiri, his father-in-law, a veteran swordsman (Tatsuya Nakadai), vows to expose the cruelty and hypocrisy of the warrior code. The film has a steady, hypnotic momentum; the director, Masaki Kobayashi, wrings as much drama out of facial twitches as he does out of sword fights. He's helped, immensely, by Nakadai's molten performance and Toru Takemitsu's spare, disquieting music. In Japanese.—*M.S.* (Walter Reade Theatre; March 4-5.)

Kundun—Martin Scorsese's examination of the early life of the Dalai Lama. The film is far too long, and viewers may be frustrated by its frequently shifting tone; yet, in a way, a shifting tone is just the right treatment for a religion that emphasizes serene detachment over emotion. And, visually, this may be the director's richest feast since “Raging Bull.”—*Sarah Kerr* (Guild and Village East Cinemas.)

L.A. Confidential—Curtis Hanson's new thriller, set in Los Angeles in the early fifties, is about a group of cops who between them cover the full moral range, from the uptight integrity of Ed Exley (Guy Pearce) to the four-star sadism of Bud White (Russell Crowe). The plot, adapted from the James Ellroy novel, is both murky and tangled, yet the movie never bogs down. Hanson paces the tale with ease, decorating it with one neat performance after another: James Cromwell as the smiling police chief, David Strathairn as an oily pimp, Kim Basinger as one of his prize charges, and, better still, Kevin Spacey as a “celebrity crime-stopper” who gets dragged into the dark and dirty.—*A.L.* (9/22/97) (Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, and 34th Street Showplace.)

Live Flesh—Half an hour into Pedro Almodóvar's new film and you're already up to your chin in blood and lust. The farce is played, as usual, with impassioned gravity, yet is somehow bereft of the high spirits that used to grace the director's films. With Liberto Rabal, Francesca Neri, and Javier Bardem. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (1/26/98) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Mrs. Dalloway—With Marleen Gorris (“Antonia's Line”) as director, Eileen Atkins as screenwriter, and Vanessa Redgrave in the title role, the near-impossible is achieved: Virginia Woolf's lyrical evocation of life-as-flux is safely transferred to a visual medium. The first ten minutes seem pell-mell, as though Gorris and Atkins were trying to capture, from every angle, the scattered perspectives from which the snobbish, fragile Clarissa Dalloway views the world on a perfect June day in 1923, on the eve of one of her famous parties. But soon enough everything clicks, helped by an evocative soundtrack, well-edited flashbacks, and an adroit substitution of voice-over for the novel's interior monologues. Woolf's musical language is remarkably preserved, and the performances—by John Standing, Margaret Tyzack, Amelia Bullmore, and Rupert Graves, among others—are a triumph of ensemble acting.—*D.M.* (2/16/98) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)



Clockwise from top: John Goodman, Julianne Moore, Jeff Bridges, and Steve Buscemi in “The Big Lebowski.”

STEVE BRODNER

Nil by Mouth—Gary Oldman's first feature as writer and director is set in South London, and its story line couldn't be simpler: Ray (Ray Winstone) is self-destructing on drink and drugs and becoming a menace to his wife (Kathy Burke), her dull brother (Charlie Creed-Miles), and the rest of the clan. Oldman, who grew up in a world like this, makes Ray's bestial spasms hard to watch, but the film hangs around in your brain.—*A.L.* (2/9/98) (Angelika Film Center.)

Ran (1985)—Set in the sixteenth century, Akira Kurosawa's epic spectacle, a variation on the theme of “King Lear,” is static, but it deepens, and it has its own ornery splendor. It's a totally conceptualized work—perhaps the biggest piece of conceptual art ever made. For the first forty minutes or so, the picture is all preparation, and it seems dead, but then the preparation begins to pay off, and by the end the fastidiousness and the monumental scale of what Kurosawa has undertaken can flood you with admiration. With Mieko Harada as Lady Kaede, the vengeful demon who brings down the House of Ichimonji; Tatsuya Nakadai as the warlord head of the clan; the Japanese transvestite pop star Peter as the Fool; and Hisashi Ikawa as Kurogane, who defies Lady Kaede. The fine, harsh, percussive score is by Toru Takemitsu. In Japanese.—*P.K.* (Walter Reade Theatre; March 5 and March 10.)

The Replacement Killers—In his American début, the Hong Kong action star Chow Yun-Fat plays a hit man assigned to kill a little boy. He's reluctant to harm a child, so, with the help of a tough-with-a-heart-of-gold faker of passports (Mira Sorvino), he goes on the lam. Chow is one of the most photogenic men on earth, but, removed from the Hong Kong setting, all the choreographed murder feels dull, poorly paced, and, come to think of it, pretty demented. Antoine Fuqua directed.—*S.K.* (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

Sphere—Barry Levinson films Michael Crichton's thriller about a hack psychiatrist (Dustin Hoffman) who once wrote a sloppy government report on how to handle an alien encounter. Now a weird-looking ship is found at the bottom of the sea, and he and the response team he recommended (including Sharon Stone as a biochemist and Samuel L. Jackson as a mathematician) are recruited to check it out. At times the film verges comically on white-male paranoia: Jackson starts acting uppity, and Stone becomes a psychotic seeking revenge on Hoffman for an old affair that turned sour. Still, Levinson is terrific at claustrophobia. In fact, this doesn't resemble any of his previous films so much as it does his gripping TV series, “Homicide.”—*S.K.* (Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Sweet Hereafter—An exquisitely sober movie by Atom Egoyan, based on the novel by Russell Banks. Ian Holm holds the screen with volcanic force as a big-city lawyer trying to bring a class-action suit on behalf of a small blue-collar town in the wake of a school-bus accident. The cast is uniformly good, and Sarah Polley, as a paralyzed survivor of the crash, is extraordinary.—*D.M.* (11/24/97) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Titanic—At well over three hours, James Cameron's grand new picture has plenty of romance to get through before it breaks the vessel in half. Leonardo DiCaprio plays the freewheeling Jack, who wins a steerage ticket and finds himself falling for the wealthy

Rose (Kate Winslet), to the disapproval of her mother (Frances Fisher) and her brute of a fiancé (Billy Zane). The social animus of the story, like its imaginative majesty, is Dickensian; this all feels like two hundred million dollars well spent.—*A.L.* (12/15/97) (Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Opening March 6, Peta Wilson in "The Sadness of Sex."

CORNEL RUBINO

Wag the Dog—Barry Levinson's comedy about the politics of spin control, from a screenplay by David Mamet and Hilary Henkin. The premise involves a Presidential incumbent caught in a sex scandal less than two weeks before Election Day. Robert De Niro plays a Machiavellian spinmeister who devises a fake war and hires a Hollywood producer (Dustin Hoffman) to orchestrate it. The movie is very clever, but its tone of gleeful sendup never takes you beyond what you already know.—*D.M.* (1/5/98) (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Wedding Singer—A romantic comedy in which everything twinkles, from the credits to Adam Sandler's eyes. Sandler is Robbie Hart, once the spandex-clad lead singer of a high-school rock group, now a master of ceremonies at color-coördinated weddings in Connecticut. He's a sweetheart of a guy until his own fiancée (Angela Featherstone) fails to show up at their wedding; at his next gig he has a psychotic fit and serenades the newlyweds with "Love Stinks." Drew Barrymore comes to the rescue as a waitress who's worked receptions with Robbie and enlists his help in planning *her* wedding to a DeLorean-driving junk-bond trader who clearly doesn't deserve her; she and Robbie—you guessed it—fall for each other. The movie is full of inspired touches as well as excessive ones: its appeal lies in the way its humor treads the line between smart sendup and campy overkill. Long patches of it are hilarious, and might make you nostalgic for life in the 'burbs, even if you grew up in the city. Directed by Frank Coraci, from a screenplay by Tim Herlihy.—*D.M.* (Cinema II, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

ALSO PLAYING

AN ALAN SMITHEE FILM—BURN, HOLLYWOOD, BURN: Cinema I, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **AMISTAD:** 84th Street Sixplex and Embassy 2. . . . **AYN RAND: A SENSE OF LIFE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **BOOGIE NIGHTS** (reviewed in our issue of 10/13/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE BREAK:** Quad Cinema. . . . **CAUGHT UP:** Criterion Center and Orpheum VII. . . . **COMRADES, ALMOST A LOVE STORY:** Cinema Village. . . . **DANGEROUS BEAUTY:** Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Square, and 64th and 2nd. . . . **DARK CITY:** Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **DECONSTRUCTING HARRY:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and The Screening Room. . . . **DESPERATE MEASURES:** Criterion Center. . . . **THE GINGERBREAD MAN** (2/2/98): Chelsea Cinemas and Coronet Cinemas. . . . **HOME ALONE 3:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE ICE STORM** (9/29/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **I LOVE YOU . . . DON'T TOUCH ME:** Broadway and 62nd, Chelsea Cinemas, and First and 62nd Cinemas. . . . **THE JACKAL:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **JACKIE BROWN** (1/12/98): Embassy 3. . . . **JOHN GRISHAM'S THE RAINMAKER:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **KISSING A FOOL:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Waverly. . . . **KISS THE GIRLS:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **KRIPPENDORF'S TRIBE:** Cinema 3rd Avenue, Embassy 1, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **LEATHER JACKET LOVE STORY:** Quad Cinema. . . . **MA VIE EN ROSE:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema. . . . **MOON OVER BROADWAY:** Film Forum. . . . **PALMETTO:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **THE REAL BLONDE:** Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Waverly. . . . **SCREAM 2:** Embassy 3. . . . **SENSELESS:** East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **TOMORROW NEVER DIES:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE WINGS OF THE DOVE** (11/10/97): Angelika Film Center and Beekman.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—"Rashomon" (1951, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—March 5 at 2:30: "Bitter Rice" (1948, Giuseppe De Santis; in Italian). . . . March 5 at 6: One program in a series about the history of 8-mm. films and videos in the United States. . . . March 5 at 6 and March 8 at 5: "The Grim Reaper" (†). . . . March 6 at 2:30: "A Blow to the Heart" (1982, Gianni Amelio; in Italian). . . . March 6 at 3 and 6:30, March 7 at 2:30 and 5, and March 8 at 2:30: A showing of four of the five films nominated for Academy Awards in the foreign-language category. . . . March 6 at 6: "Misery and Nobility" (1954, Mario Mattoli; in Italian). . . . March 6 at 8 and March 7 at 2: "The Legend of the Holy Drinker" (1988, Ermanno Olmi; in Italian). . . . March 7 at 5 and March 9 at 2:30: "The Mass Is Over" (1987, Nanni Moretti; in Italian). . . . March 8 at 2: "The Battle of Algiers" (1965, Gillo Pontecorvo; in French). . . . March 9 at 6: "Ghosts in Rome" (1960, Antonio Pietrangeli; in Italian). . . . March 10 at 2:30 and 6: "Sierra de Teruel" (1939, André Malraux; in Spanish).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films for which Toru Takemitsu wrote the music; all in Japanese, with English subtitles. March 4 at 2: "Crazed Fruit" (1956, Ko Nakahara). . . . March 4 at 3:45 and 7:50 and March 5 at 6:30: "Harakiri" (†). . . . March 4 at 6:20, March 5 at 5, and March 10 at 4:30: "Antonio Gaudi" (1985, Hiroshi Teshigahara). . . . March 5 at 2 and 9 and March 10 at 6: "Ran" (†). . . . March 10 at 2 and 9: "The Ceremony" (1971, Nagisa Oshima).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed by Richard Linklater. March 7 at 2 and March 8 at 1: "It's Impossible to Learn to Plow by Reading Books" (1988). . . . March 7 at 4 and March 8 at 3: "Slacker" (1991). . . . March 8 at 5: "Before Sunrise" (1995).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). March 8 at 7, the feature will be "I'll Cry Tomorrow" (1955, Daniel Mann).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"Promise" (1986, Glenn Jordan). (Showings Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2 and 4; Thursdays and Fridays at 2, 4, and 6.)

Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.—Through March 12: The 14th Annual Israel Film Festival. (For information about show times, call 755-3020.)

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—March 10 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Le Magique" (1996, Azdine Melliti Fazai; in French).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of films that have won or been nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. March 10 at 7: "Cinema Paradiso" (1989, Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian). . . . March 10 at 9:15: "Day for Night" (†).

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, 2, and 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

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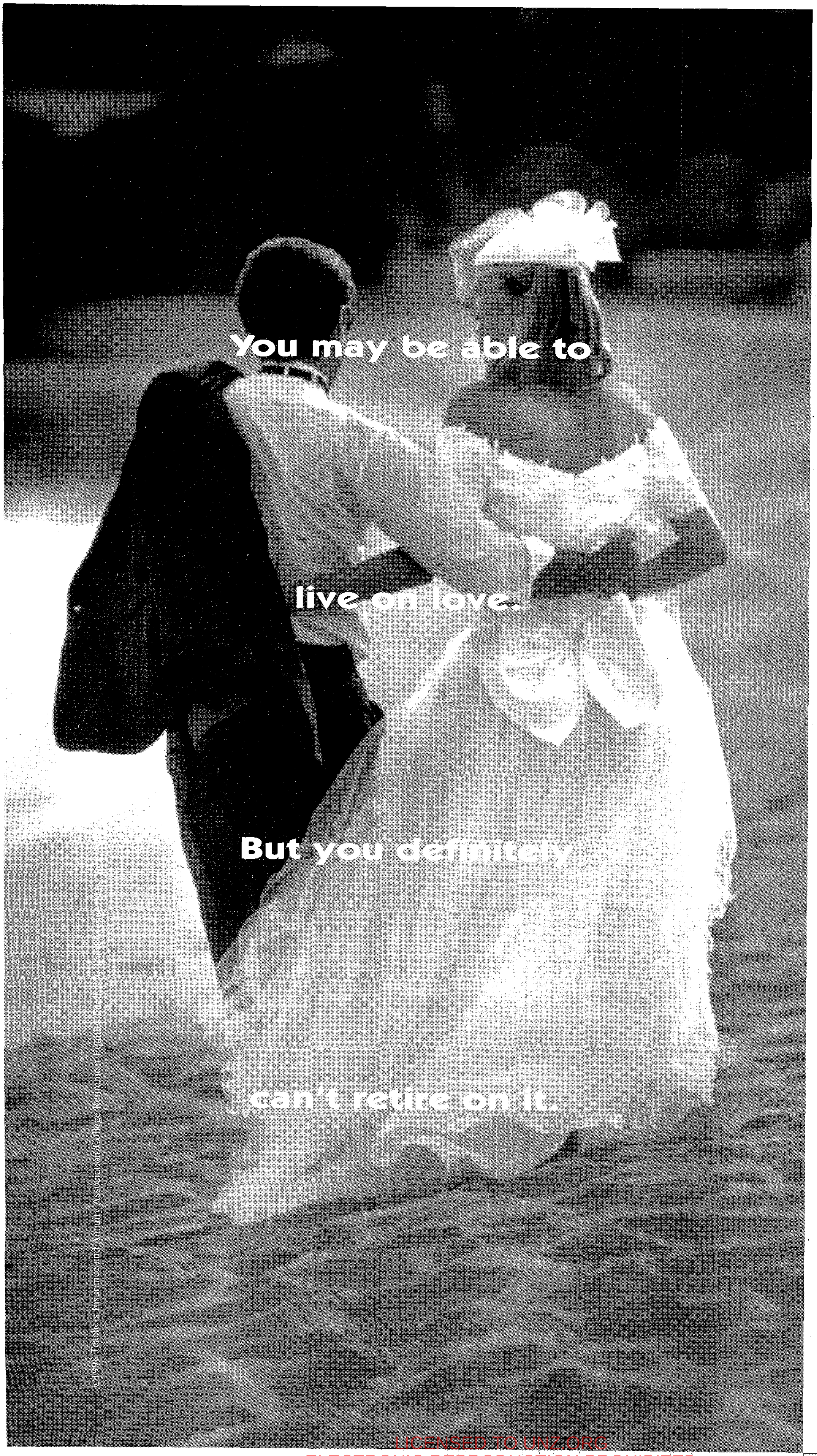
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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

WIND ON CAPITOL HILL

Meet the right-wing honeymooners who can't get enough of Ken Starr.

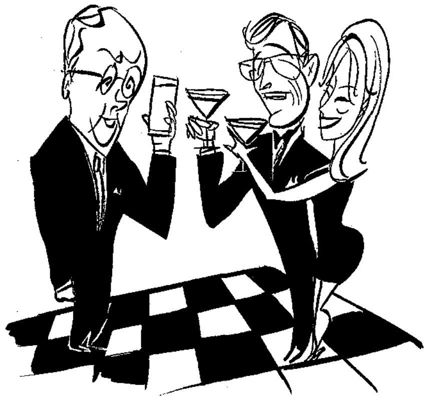
As Ken Starr begins to look more and more like Elmer Fudd and his popularity ratings approach those of Saddam Hussein, there's still one trusty friend to come to his rescue: Theodore Olson, the conservative Washington lawyer who has been mentioned as a possible candidate for the Supreme Court. When Starr's hardball tactics are criticized in the press, it is Olson who reliably counters the sleazeball-zealot image often attached to the milk-drinking minister's son. "I never felt he was someone who was out on the edge," Olson told the *Times* last month. "He's not this stiff, Sunday-school type of person," he told me. "He relaxes around his friends, and we are good friends."

The other half of the "we" is Ted's wife, Barbara, a bright young Senate lawyer who has had her hand in practically every Clinton scandal, from Travelgate to the campaign-finance hearings. If you believe that there is such a thing as a right-wing conspiracy to get the President, then Ted and Barbara Olson's Great Falls, Virginia, home could be its cocktail headquarters.

The Olsons' wedding, in May, 1996, was packed with true believers. Walking Barbara down the aisle was Laurence Silberman, the untamed judge of the D.C. circuit who voted to overturn Oliver North's conviction. Also under the tent were Starr, Justice Clarence Thomas, and Judge Robert Bork. "These aren't the angry fanatical conspiracy theorists," Bork said, recalling the wedding guests. No, they're the distinguished, low-key conspiracy theorists.

Since then, the couple have established themselves as the right wing's answer to Ben Bradlee and Sally Quinn, making their home a haven for well-heeled Clinton haters. "They're at the center of a cocktail-party circuit for people of the conservative persuasion" is how Bork puts it. Barbara, he notes, always makes sure his favorite drink is waiting. (It used to be single-malt Scotch, but now it is ginger ale. "I'm doing a health thing," the judge said.) Other regulars include Robert Bartley, the editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, and R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., the editor of the *American Spectator*, one of Ted Olson's clients.

Olson's friendship with Starr goes back to the seventies, when the two worked at the L.A. law firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. Every year, Olson and Starr get together with three other legal geeks to play their own special Supreme Court guessing game: four of them try to predict the High Court's decisions, and Starr judges the results. At the end of the year, they all go out to eat at the Inn at Little Washington, and the winner doesn't have to pay.



Starr and the Olsons

Ted Olson insists that he is not involved with Starr's investigation of the President, but here and there his fingerprints can be detected. Conspiracists in trouble call Olson to defend them. He once represented David Hale, the former Arkansas judge and convicted felon who is Starr's main Whitewater witness. Both Linda Tripp and Matt Drudge considered Olson when they were hiring new lawyers recently. Olson and Bork played judges for Paula Jones's lawyers in a moot court at the Army and Navy Club to prepare them for their day at the Supreme Court. Olson is also suspected of being "Anonymous," the co-author of Tyrrell's "future history," "The Impeachment of William Jefferson Clinton" (published before the Lewinsky scandal), which spins a fanciful scenario stocked with wiretaps and hidden tapes. (He denies it.)

Ghostwriting is the least of the favors Olson may have done for Tyrrell. For the past four years, the *Spectator* has conducted what is informally called the Arkansas Project, a campaign to dig up dirt on the President. The 1.7-million-dollar project was funded by Richard Scaife, the billionaire heir to the Mellon fortune. Last year, the *Spectator's* publisher became worried that the money might be being used by the project to pay sources of negative Clinton information like Hale and one of the state troopers who ratted on Clinton. (The *Spectator* denies that sources were paid.) When the publisher demanded a "fraud audit," the dispute escalated, and Tyrrell decided to fire him. Ted Olson, who sits on the *Spectator's* board, advised Tyrrell on how to handle the dismissal, according to several staffers. Olson wouldn't comment, except to say that all the accusations are part of a vast left-wing conspiracy to get Ken Starr. —Hanna Rosin

DEPT. OF PUFFERY

If it hadn't gone down, the Titanic might have gone up in smoke.

If you were, say, the president of Philip Morris and you were fantasizing about how to sell more cigarettes, you'd probably start with the movies. A love story, perhaps, because adolescent girls—who are your

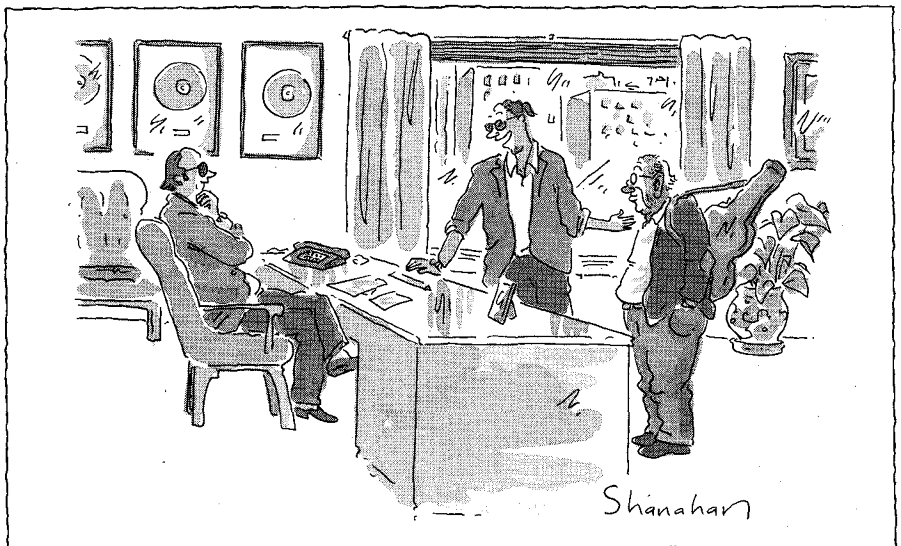
ILLUSTRATION BY TOM BACHTELL

target audience—love love stories. The male lead would be a teen idol. He would smoke while lying on a bench, gazing up at the night sky. The young heroine would rebelliously blow smoke in her mother's face. In a spirited moment at a party, she might snatch a cigarette from the mouth of a stranger and draw deeply, staring into her lover's eyes. You'd put them on a boat. A big, romantic boat. The boat would sink. The film would be a blockbuster, a movie that teen-age girls would see three and four and five times, until they could mime every line and gesture.

Obviously, this is only a dream, since no self-respecting teen idol would work for a cigarette company, and no cigarette company could ever get away with so blatantly targeting an adolescent audience. But this is the wonderful thing about being in the cigarette business right now: Whatever you cannot do for yourself, Hollywood, apparently, will do for you. "If I were the head of a tobacco company, I'd say, 'God bless "Titanic,"'" Bruce Silverman, a California ad executive, who directed that state's antismoking media campaign, says.

What makes "Titanic" perfect as a smoking movie is that it transcends the smoking-movie cliché. Most movies are, in some way, linked to a specific brand. Last summer's "My Best Friend's Wedding," for example, in which Julia Roberts smoked one cigarette after another as she schemed to defeat a romantic rival, was clearly a Newport movie. In Newport ads, the media critic Mark Crispin Miller has written, "there is always an aggressor acting on a victim—whose expression has, deliberately, been made ambiguous, a look at once of 'pleasure' and of terror." (The gray area between pleasure and terror, it can safely be said, is the subtext of all Julia Roberts movies.) Bruce Willis's chain-smoking loner hero in the "Die Hard" series, on the other hand, is pure Marlboro Man. "The Marlboro Man is almost always alone and is never subject to any authority whatsoever," the marketing expert Richard Pollay wrote in 1995. "There are no parents, no older brothers, no foreman . . . in Marlboro Country."

But what is "Titanic"? Leonardo DiCaprio smoking pensively on the Titanic deck is classic Marlboro Man. The swells in first class trading cigarettes are Dunhill. The rough-and-tumble crowd in steerage rolling their own could be taken as a coded reference to the no-frills, no-additive, no-bull Winston, while Kate Winslet blowing smoke in her mother's face is very much "You've come a long way, baby"—Virginia Slims. As for the climactic smoking scene, in which Winslet coquettishly snatches a cigarette from a man's mouth, that's pure Joe Camel. As Camel's former ad agency, Young and Rubicam, said of the brand's archetypal smoker, "Always the winner, on top of the situation, beating the system, and covering the scene, whatever he does he does with a style and joie de vivre all his own." In "Titanic," smoking is sexy and social and sophisticated and genuine and rebellious, and in the end virtually everybody dies—which is the most perfect touch of all. —MALCOLM GLADWELL



"You're looking at the next Bob Dylan."

INK

On deadline for Time's seventy-fifth-anniversary celebration.

Landing the cover of *Time* is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the superfamous, along with being a punch line on the "Tonight" show. Landing the cover of *Time*, however, is not in itself enough to get you invited to *Time's* seventy-fifth-anniversary party, which is happening Tuesday night at Radio City Music Hall. "The Unabomber was not invited—not that he could have come," *Time's* managing editor, Walter Isaacson, said last week. Neither was *Time's* most recent cover girl, Monica Lewinsky, whose former boss, the President, is one of the evening's featured speakers. Isaacson said, "I guess the invitations went out before she was on the cover."

Toni Morrison, Muhammad Ali, Claudia Schiffer, and Steven Spielberg were lucky enough to score their covers earlier, so they are all expected to attend, as is Sharon Stone, who has never actually been on the cover of *Time*. Not that all the invitees are eye candy. "Jack Kevorkian is coming," Isaacson said. So is the newly minted socialite Bill Ginsburg. Then there *was* time to invite Monica? "Uh, I guess so. I think Bill Ginsburg snuck in."

"There were weeks of people asking who else was coming," Isaacson said. David Letterman's people tried to find out whether Jay Leno was coming, suggesting that Dave would be more inclined to step out for an event at which his rival was not in attendance. (Neither late-night guy will be there.) The Pope had to send regrets. Mikhail Gorbachev will speak, as will Bill Gates, who was slapped with a custard pie in Brussels last month. But he should have nothing to fear this time: the President is bringing the Secret Service.

Isaacson said that the seating plan encourages mixing and matching between scientists and starlets, politicians and pop stars. "So if Jewel is coming"—she is—"she will not be put at a music table. She'll be put at a table with someone she can discuss foreign policy with." Such as? "I would say Henry Kissinger, but I have been in enough trouble with Henry Kissinger in my day. Maybe Dick Holbrooke?"

"I got three requests to sit next to Tom Hanks," Isaacson said. "I threatened that anybody who insisted on seating assignments would be disinvited." Or there's that seat next to Dr. Kevorkian.

—REBECCA MEAD

A GOOD SCREAM

An Olympic nymphet shows that power comes in small packages.

BEFORE we forget the dreamy, premillennial snow swirl of the Nagano Games, let's rewind to Tara Lipinski's scream. Emitted at the precise moment when the fifteen-year-old skater realized that her performance in the ladies' free skate had won the gold medal, Tara's scream was something new in skating, a sound that had little in common with the conventional ladylike pieties of "kiss and cry," the off-the-ice box where the skaters go to wait for their scores. It did not trill, nor did it warble. It was primal, but it was not out of control. There were no little breathy-gulpy sounds indicating awe before a larger power, such as were uttered by both Michelle Kwan, who took the silver, and Lu Chen, who took the bronze. As the two older skaters came off the ice, they "flooded," as the shrinks like to say. Only Lipinski, the youngest American athlete at the Nagano Games, seemed master of the occasion.

Emerging from the chest of this four-foot-ten-and-a-half-inch, eighty-two-pound girl (Tara has the body of a bionic twelve-year-old), the scream may also have been the clarion of a new era of prepubescent-girl power in sports. According to Peter Banks, who coached the swimmer Brooke Bennett to a gold medal in the Atlanta Games, prepubescent girls have a strength-to-size ratio that is greater than that of any other athlete, male or female, of any age. "It just makes them pop right out of the pool," he says. "If you can start to train them at seven or so, so that they have the endurance and the discipline to take advantage of this surge when it comes, there's a window of opportunity in which you have an amazingly powerful athlete."

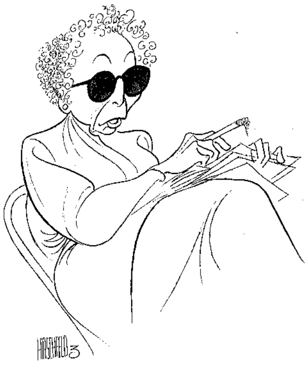
The scream convulsed young Tara, carried her up from her chair and then down into an awkward half-crouch. It was almost sexual, although speculating along these lines is close to committing a thought crime these days, when "Lolita" can't find a distributor and Barnes & Noble is pressured to stop selling books of Jock Sturges photographs. Yet the figure-skating champion is a fixture in the gallery of American male fantasies. In the 1968 film "Carnal Knowledge," the figure skater is the central erotic motif, that combination of purity and sexuality which the Jack Nicholson character can never attain. After Tara's victory, certain men could be heard waxing nostalgic for the body of Katarina Witt. (A piggish sentiment, perhaps, but it's the men who *do* find Tara sexy that you really have to worry about.)

Tara is now endorsing Barbie dolls. Is there a logic in getting an ice queen with the body of a child to sell a child's toy with the body of a sexpot? Maybe we could all use a good scream.

—JOHN SEABROOK

POSTSCRIPT

Edith Oliver: One on the aisle.



EDITH OLIVER, who died last week, at the age of eighty-four, lived on self-reversals and contrarieties. When she joined *The New Yorker*, in 1947, as a nonfiction reader cum book editor, she made William Shawn, the managing editor, promise that he would never ask her to write anything—and then began contributing sharp, anonymous book reviews. In 1961, she started a five-year run as a part-time movie reviewer and a thirty-two-year run as the magazine's theatre critic, Off Broadway and On. Like her idols, Max Beerbohm and Wolcott Gibbs, she had no patience for sham, pretension, pomp, artiness, or long-windedness. (Her reviews tended to get shorter as the years went by, and her prose tighter.) She had her own secret notions of what good acting and good plays were, and bad acting and bad plays made her angry. In time, Edith Oliver also became a super theatre teacher, supporting the burgeoning black theatre of the sixties and seventies and spending her summers working with young playwrights and actors at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, in New London, Connecticut. The director Lloyd Richards, who brought her to the O'Neill, said the other day that "she had a way of getting right to the heart of what was wrong in a play. She punctured the bubble, but never deflated the ego."

Edith Oliver, née Goldsmith, was born on the Upper West Side. She rarely mentioned her father, but often said that her mother, whom she called "the late Maude Goldsmith," was the only person she ever knew who could simultaneously smoke a cigarette, read a book, and knit a sweater. She lasted two wayward years at Smith, finally leaving after she flunked meteorology. She studied acting with the famous Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and got into radio, writing the questions for a pioneer quiz show and taking bit parts as a gun moll.

She was short, curvy, vain, gregarious, and hyperactive, and she wore Hattie Carnegie suits and dresses before switching to pants and blouses. She had more of a bark than a laugh, and her voice, soaked in cigarette smoke for sixty years, was gravelly. She liked to bandy four-letter words, and she could be spiky and blunt. (She once said that a much admired writer was brilliant but had no talent.) Yet she lavishly praised good writers, having herself suffered from writer's paranoia, and fellow staff members treasured her telephone calls: "This is the best ever. You're a genius, baby, and don't you forget it. Goodbye." She had a wild sense of the ridiculous. Several years ago, a fire broke out in her building, filling the hallway outside her apartment with smoke. When a neighbor called to suggest that she put a wet towel across the gap at the bottom of her door, she immediately replied, "I'll tell Alice"—her ancient housekeeper—"to soak herself and lie down in front of the door." —WHITNEY BALLIETT

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AMERICAN NOTES

THE END OF LOYALTY

Why has betraying Clinton—and everyone else—become a national pastime?

BY HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.

THERE was a time when exemplary traits—thrift, honesty, temperance, what have you—were coupled with exemplary lives, when every virtue had a mascot. But these are the nineties, and Parson Weems is dead. Nowadays, George Washington and the cherry tree is a parable about the despoliation of the environment—the father of our nation as apprentice clear-cutter. Our virtues are faceless, and our faces are without virtue.

And yet the endangered trait of loyalty in modern American politics can indeed be matched with a face. It belongs to a woman who grew up in modest circumstances in small-town Ohio, who moved to Washington in 1943, in response to the wartime need for government typists, and who, while working for a House committee a few years later, impressed a freshman congressman with her brisk efficiency. The impression was mutual. His own personal tidiness, the precision of his expense accounts, the orderliness of his office—all these things moved her deeply. In 1950, he was elected to the Senate, and she applied to be his personal secretary, duly notifying him of two possible disqualifications. "First of all, I'm a Democrat," she said, "and, secondly, I'm a Catholic." Richard Nixon was undeterred, and the course of Rose Mary Woods's career was set.

Over the next quarter century, through triumph and ignominy, she stood by his side. When Nixon, battered by a slush-fund scandal in 1952, was under pressure to quit as Eisenhower's running mate, Woods saved his career by shortstopping his impulsive letter of resignation from the ticket. When, six years later, Vice-President Nixon made a state visit to Venezuela and his motorcade was stoned, Woods was there to brace his resolve. When he was defeated in his 1960 Presidential bid, she was by his side, a staunch companion in office and in exile alike. When President Nixon went to China, Rose Mary Woods went to China. And, when Presidential tapes were subpoenaed in 1973, Rose Mary Woods alone was entrusted with the task of transcribing them.

Then, when one of those tapes turned out to have a mysterious gap of eighteen and a half minutes, Rose Mary Woods took the fall, publicly demonstrating the White House account of how it had come about: that she had hit the record button by mistake while stretching to reach a telephone five feet away and keeping one foot on the operating treadle. To protect the President, a woman who prided herself above all else on her professionalism was obliged to claim a Chaplinesque degree of incompetence, before Judge John Sirica and before the world. On the cover of *Newsweek*, her picture was emblazoned with the words "Rose Mary's Boo-Boo."

She may have stretched, but she never wavered, never sought to salvage her reputation by distancing herself from him. As a colleague of hers said at the time, "Nothing he could do would make her stop believing in him." On the day President Nixon decided to resign, he wasn't the one to break the news to his family. He asked her to do so.

In the I-am-woman-hear-me-roar seventies, she inevitably seemed less a role model than a cautionary tale. Childless and unmarried, Rose Mary Woods "devoted almost half her fifty-seven years to one man and has very little to show for it," *McCall's* admonished its readers a year after Nixon's resignation. How pathetic, how laughable—how impressive! Rose Mary Woods an exemplary American? It was hard, in those days, to see her as anything but a national joke. In 1982, a reunion of Nixon's Cabinet and staff members—among them John Mitchell, Chuck Colson, and Pat Buchanan—gathered in Washington's Marriott Hotel, along with the disgraced former President himself, to mark the anniversary of his 1972 landslide. Rose Mary Woods, true to form, told those assembled that

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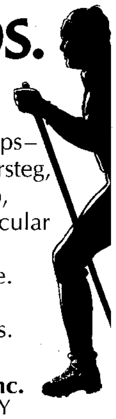
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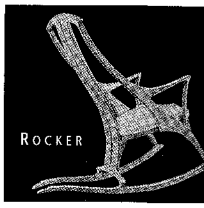
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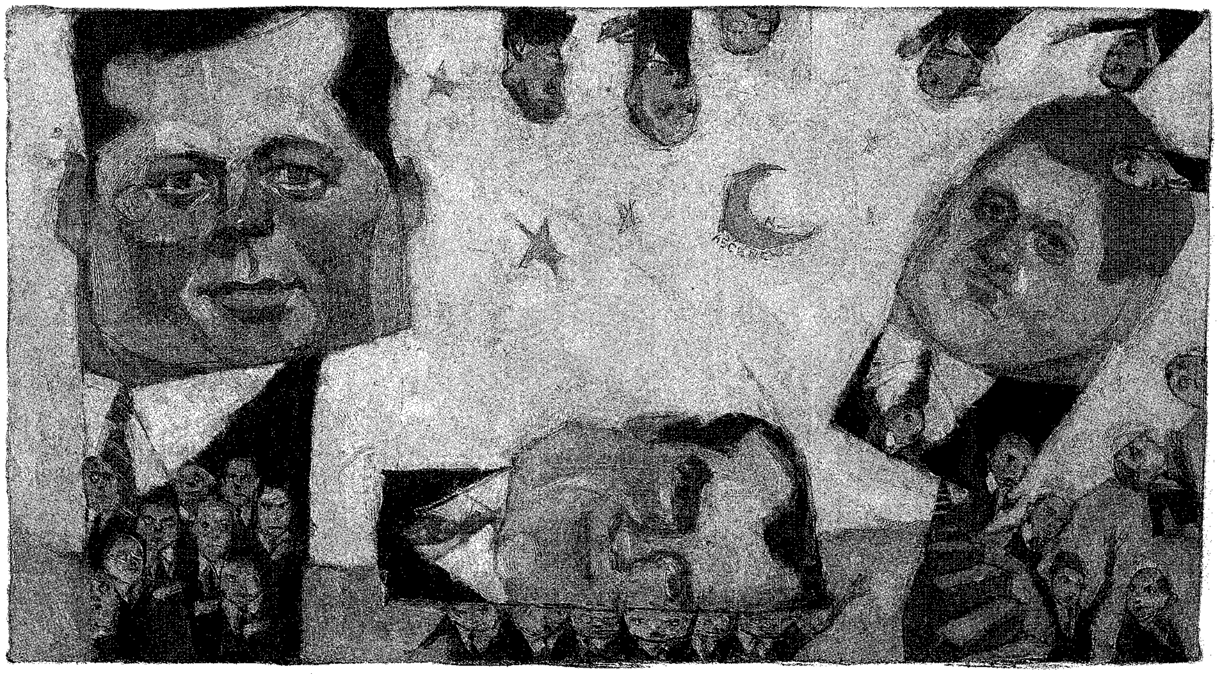
Richard Nixon was "the most honorable man this country ever produced." I suspect that the ensuing standing ovation was as much for her as for him; that it was fuelled by a nostalgic sense of the passing of an era. Not the Nixon era, the Woods era. Nixon merely symbolized corruption, and the corrupt, like the poor, will be always with us. But what Woods symbolized—unswerving loyalty—must have seemed fated for something worse than disgrace: it seemed fated for irrelevance.



In Washington, James Carville says, "they glorify you if you're disloyal. A disloyal person is made out to be a shrewd person of integrity."

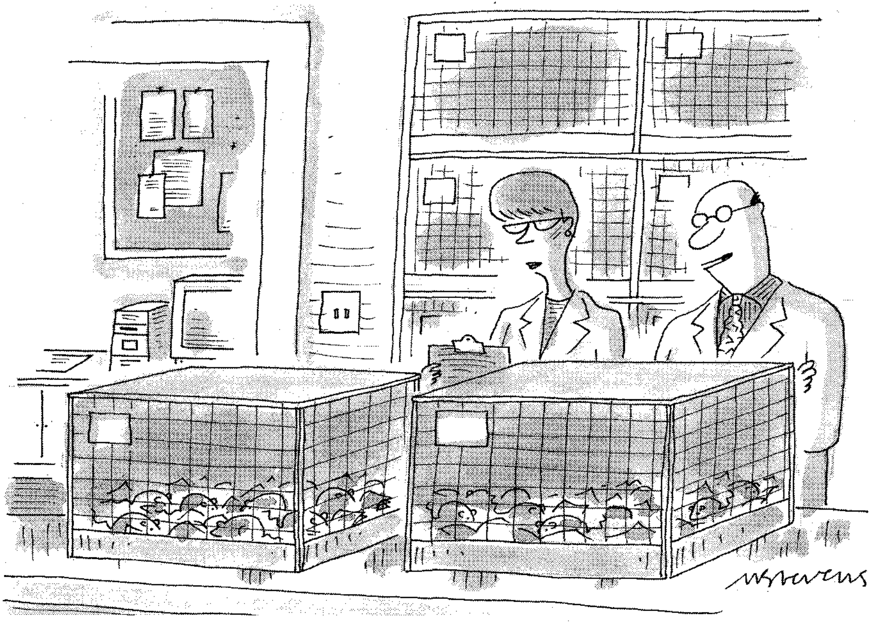
N. ASCENCIOS

THE erosion of this public value, to be sure, has been gradual and remains far from complete. Disloyalty is as old as Eden, and American politics has always been decidedly post-Edenic. And yet in the Clinton Administration's most recent bout of scandal, disloyalty functions very much like a literary leitmotiv. It hasn't escaped notice that Linda Tripp's breach of faith was the first of many, that it prompted a veritable "La Ronde" of betrayal. The first credible voice to speak of impeachment was Clinton's onetime top aide George Stephanopoulos; among the first to mention resignation was his ex-chief of staff Leon Panetta. Next, Clinton's former chief strategist Dick Morris was speculating sordidly on the radio about the First Lady's sexuality. Even the redoubtable Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., Clinton's confidant, was reported to have leaked an account that the *Times* described as "potentially harmful to the President," though legally protective of Jordan (to wit, that Clinton was aware of the assistance Jordan gave to Monica Lewinsky but did not inform him that she might be named as a witness in the Paula Jones lawsuit). "I know what loyalty is," Jordan is reported to have said, "and I'm not a fool." And, while nobody faults the President's deeply religious personal secretary, Betty Currie, she is believed to have decided to place her obligation to the truth above personal fealty. "WHAT DOES BETTY CURRIE KNOW?" asked a recent *Newsweek* cover line. Nobody asked that about Rose Mary Woods; it went without saying that she knew *everything*, and that she would never, never tell.

"I don't think I've seen such a disloyal bunch," a Washington veteran says of the Clinton White House. "Compare them to Kennedy's inner circle, or Johnson's, or Nixon's." There's something to this. Kennedy insiders like Ted Sorensen, Kenny O'Donnell, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Evelyn Lincoln now seem the embodiment of the courtier's discretion. "The Kennedy people were so tied to him by admiration and affection that it's very hard to imagine any member of his White House staff joining in any kind of chorus of reproach," Schlesinger tells me. And Jack Valenti, who first came to prominence as a special assistant to President Johnson, says, "You have to count me an out-of-date dinosaur. I come from an era when loyalty and gratitude were regally honored." Even when members of Johnson's Administration resigned over policy matters, they kept their protests largely in camera. Similarly, the steadfastness of Richard Nixon's inner circle—John Mitchell, Al Haig, and Leonard Garment among them—is all the more striking for its thanklessness. History does not regard John Mitchell, who protected his boss, more charitably than it does John Dean, who did not.

Times have changed, all right. "In a strange way, loyalty is now seen as some kind of character flaw," Valenti says. Paul Begala, a 1992 campaign aide of Clinton's who was summoned back to the White House in the wake of the Lewinsky scandal, puts it even more forcefully: "We have a media culture that derides loyalty, sees it as phony, looks for an ulterior motive, or at best is patronizing about it." To such Clinton defenders, the really striking thing isn't that loyalty itself has waned but that the public regard for it has waned. "A loyal person is seen as a cross between a sycophant and a fool," James Carville, the chief strategist for Clinton's 1992 campaign, says pungently. "Washington has come to the point where it *glorifies* you if you're disloyal. A disloyal person is made out to be a shrewd person of integrity. I mean, you have Don Imus glorifying George for speaking out, O.K.? Someone who speaks out against a person that he works for is seen as having integrity and independence."

Every Administration in recent history, it must be said, has had its well-



"One group gets tiny copies of the 'Times,' the other gets tiny copies of the 'Post.'"

publicized apostasies: think of James Fallows, David Stockman, Donald Regan, and Richard Darman. At worst, the Clinton Administration has merely progressed a little farther down a slippery slope. If there are fifty ways to leave your lover, there are at least as many modes of political defection—from wistful idealism (Robert Reich) to "helpful" candor (Leon Panetta) to unfeigned moral outrage (Peter Edelman, who quit a top post at the Department of Health and Human Services over welfare reform). Not that there's always a bright line between candor and careerism. "If you ask me if they have a bunch of résumé polishers in the White House, the answer is yes," Carville says.

And so disloyalty has been defined down. These days, it often seems that the only thing open for discussion is the timing of the kiss-and-tell. For Dick Morris, loyalty consisted of waiting to publish his book about how he got the President reëlected until after the results were in. Stephanopoulos, some people in the White House like to say, has been loyal mainly to a $2.8-million book advance, which prohibits him from divulging the book's contents prior to publication. (This would not pass for the code of silence in Palermo.) Even Vernon Jordan's seeming defection has been greeted with something less than shock. "Vernon's like a cat who always lands on his feet," Carville says shrewdly. "He's a good friend and loyal to the President. He's a good friend and loyal to Vernon. And I'm sure he'll remain true to both."

Loyalty is, in essence, a premodern virtue. As such, it is understood—even by those who profess devotion to it—to be one of those things we've inherited and must make do with, like a grandmother's quilt, or the national debt. Its natural context is a social world of reciprocal dependencies: lords and vassals, lieges and subjects. "In the military," General Colin Powell avers, "loyalty remains a very important and vital culture—loyalty to your superiors, loyalty to your subordinates, loyalty also to your contemporaries, to your buddies. Loyalty, trust, character are all mixed together. We are sometimes considered old-fashioned, and we are sometimes considered anachronistic." Anachronistic or not, when Valenti describes his loyalty to his President he does so in the context of precisely such reciprocation. "I make no bones about the fact that I wouldn't be where I am without Lyndon Johnson," he says. "He brought me to the largest proscenium stage in the world. So I became a minor celebrity, as does every Presidential assistant close to the President. Whatever so-called celebrity status I have achieved, it was Lyndon Johnson who brought me to that place, and therefore I owe him big time." Accordingly, when he talks about Stephanopoulos he scarcely conceals his disgust. Where would Stephanopoulos be without Clinton? "You owe this man who has brought you to the klieg lights, where everybody thinks you're terrific only because you bask in his reflected glory," he says. "You owe him loyalty." He waxes medieval as he contemplates this: "Someone ought to be able to *pull your fingernails out with a Stillson wrench*—and you still wouldn't betray the man!"

That's how the professionally loyal still talk today—not the wrench part, the gratitude part. "I exist professionally only because of James Carville and Bill Clinton," Paul Begala says forthrightly. "I mean, I'm a perfectly lovely person—just ask my wife. But professionally I'm a creature of them. How can I not owe them at least the benefit of the doubt?" Another Clinton aide I spoke to distinguished between Stephanopoulos and Panetta in this regard: Stephanopoulos was made by Clinton, but Panetta, a former congressman, was not, so the burden of loyalty did not apply to him equally.

Obviously, loyalty can't be reduced to a reckoning of quid pro quo. (There are terms for such relationships, but "loyalty" isn't one of them.) Still, several past and present members of the Clinton White House see the desertions as reflecting a larger estrangement—what one calls a "context of disloyalty." Stephanopoulos, they claim, was publicly humiliated in 1993 when he was displaced by David Gergen, and humiliated again when, after the 1994 election, he was displaced a second time, by Dick Morris. "Without letting anyone go, what Clinton basically did was fire all his political aides, including Harold Ickes and Leon Panetta, and he replaced them with a rump group," one former aide says. "Context matters in terms of how loyal they believe others have been to them." Certainly the utilitarian nature of some of Clinton's relationships can come as a painful revelation. "When he described me as antidemocratic on national TV," recalls Lani Guinier, a former F.O.B. whose candidacy for a top civil-rights job Clinton proposed and then abandoned, "I felt kicked in the teeth."

BUT loyalty is essentially premodern for a larger and simpler reason: it bespeaks partiality, and our modernity was ushered in by a trumpet voluntary of impartial principles, rights, abstractions. Rather as winding cow paths gave way to macadamized gridirons, the old codes of duty and honor gave way to the cool calculus of moral rationalism. This is the Enlightenment's gift to us, and its curse. Take William Godwin—please. In his "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" (1793)

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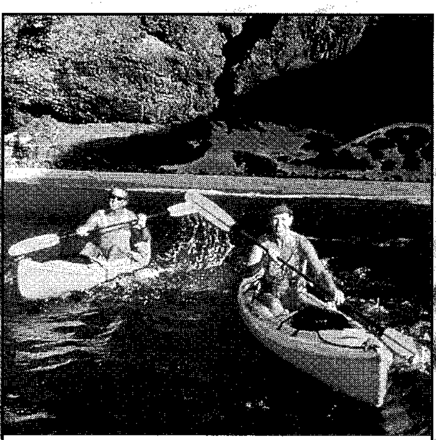

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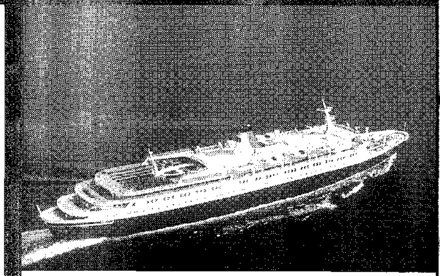

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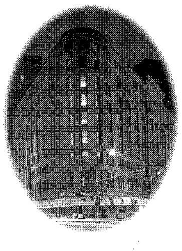

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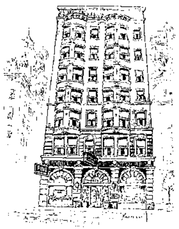

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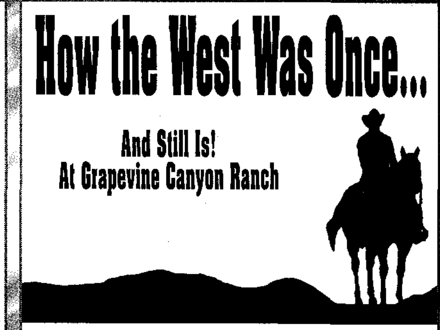
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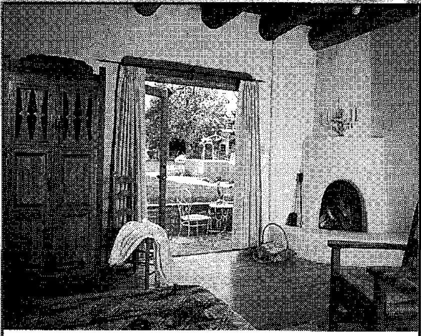

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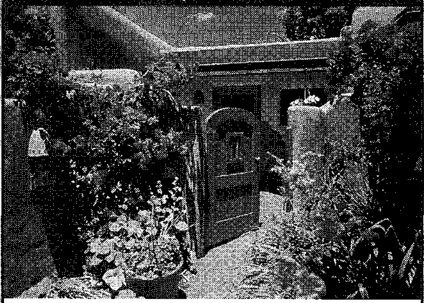

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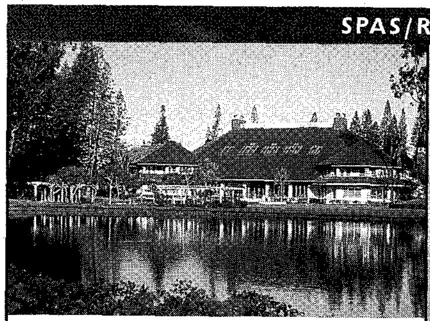

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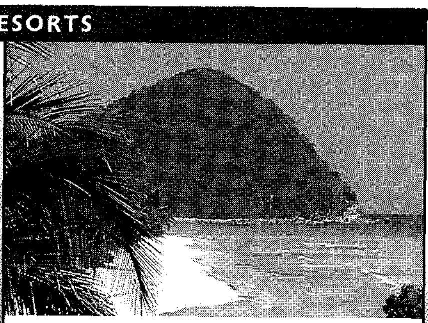

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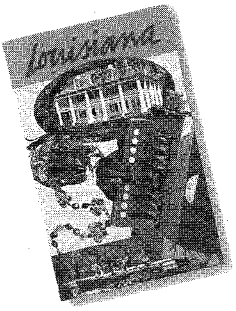

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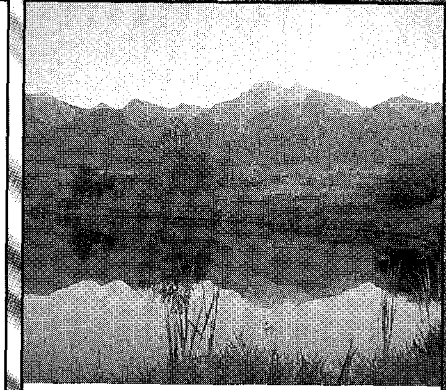

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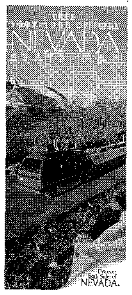

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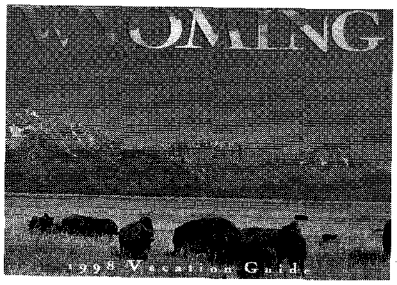

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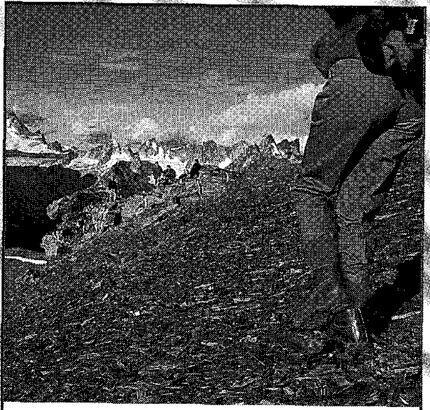

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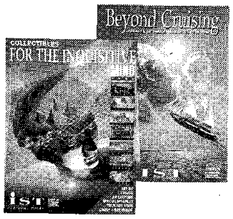

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he conjures up a situation where you are able to rescue only one person from a burning house: do you save your mother or Archbishop Fenelon? For Godwin, it's an easy call: you go for the Archbishop, since he has the greater social contribution to make. (Godwin's daughter, Mary Shelley, was the author of "Frankenstein," and its inspiration must have been near to hand.) "What magic is in the pronoun 'my' that should justify us in overturning the decisions of impartial truth?" Godwin demands. And you could argue—the Columbia law professor George P. Fletcher does so, quite cogently—that this tradition of liberal universalism has tended to send loyalty into ethical exile. Moral modernizers have always preferred lofty abstractions to personal attachments, and, as Godwin saw, loyalty cannot be divorced from the magic of the pronoun "my." It really is constituted by possessives: my mother, my friend, my partners, my lord, my dependents, my President.

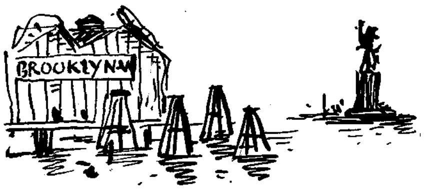
Be true to your school, the Beach Boys urged, but to a new generation of post-Watergate idealists the only imperative was to do the right thing: to be a citizen of the world, to be honest, fair-minded, and principled. Chances were, your school was telling you the same thing. In post-Watergate America, the most influential movement in moral education encouraged schoolchildren to renounce personal ties for higher principles, as if to manufacture a generation of miniature William Godwins. Its mastermind was the late Lawrence Kohlberg, a Harvard psychologist and moral educator par excellence; its blueprint was his six-stage theory of moral development.

At a time when the nation was thought to be suffering a crisis of morality, Kohlberg's theory of moral development—which perfectly captured the *bien pensant* wisdom of the day—swept through school curricula across the country, from Tacoma to Brookline. The early stages—Stages 1 and 2—characterize the child who obeys authority to avoid punishment or gain some reward. Stage 3, still a fairly backward one, encompasses attributes such as loyalty, trust, and gratitude. Stage 4 exhibits respect for law and order; at Stage 5 you come to respect the social contract and individual rights. (According to Kohlberg, this is the official morality of the United States government, though only twenty per cent of Americans will ever achieve this level of moral maturity.) The highest stage, Stage 6, is a moral promised land inhabited by the likes of Socrates, Lincoln, and Gandhi: it's a stage where the enlightened few pursue justice and righteousness as determined by a self-chosen but uniform set of principles.

The theory of the six stages was, as its many proponents saw it, a key to understanding our moral maladies. Nixon "never rose above Stage 4 morality," Kohlberg once said, and so his "tragedy... was that he never understood the U.S. Constitution—a Stage 5 document." To the moral illuminati, loyalty was merely a phase you passed through en route to maturity—the ethical equivalent of acne. The measure of your moral development was, in turn, your willingness to betray personal allegiances—to an individual or a group—in the name of abstract principle. High scorers knew to answer questions like "I often place my duty to society above my duty to my company" in the affirmative. A nation of whistle-blowers seems to have been Kohlberg's dream, and he came closer to achieving it than you might imagine. And yet isn't there something humanly unappealing about those high scorers? They are William Godwin types all, letting their own dear mothers burn to a crisp with nary a second thought while they grandly escort some silk-bedizened cleric to safety. The difference between Stage 3 and Stage 6 is, indeed, not to be scanted: it is the difference between a mensch and a monster.

There are, needless to say, good reasons that loyalty got a bad name. For one thing, the quality is suspiciously integral to the world of gangs and gangsterism. Indeed, the outlaw ethos of Nixon's White House, more than anything, is what brought loyalty into disrepute as a political virtue. "The break point is Watergate and Vietnam," Stephanopoulos observes, "because they brought together loyalty and lies, which is where the conflict almost always is."

And you'll find confirmation of this from the principals of Watergate—both those who testified against Nixon and those who refused to do so. "When I decided to testify, I thought my loyalty was to the oath I'd taken when I took the job—to the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the United States," John Dean tells me. And yet Dean, who belongs to a political generation for whom loyalty mattered, carefully defends himself against the charges of ingratitude and hypocrisy. "I wasn't one of his entourage: I wasn't, if you will, invented by Richard Nixon. I also tried to give Richard Nixon, on a personal and political level, the best warning I knew how, hoping he would do the right thing. He didn't. In fact, everybody for whom I had any respect I told I was going to do exactly what I did."



G. Gordon Liddy, as a leading culprit in the Watergate conspiracy, offers a complementary perspective. "I have the utmost contempt for what was known when I was in prison as a rat, or an informer," he tells me. "But one must distinguish between a rat and a mere witness. Let's say that you, sir, were walking down the street and you saw a bank robber backing out of the front door of the Shawmut National Bank, and he had a pistol in one hand and a bag of swag in the other, and he got into an automobile and you noted the license number. You are a witness, and in my view you are under a civic obligation as a citizen to give the best description you can to the police. If, however, you are a member of the criminal party and you are captured and it is suggested to you that you will ameliorate your own punishment if you inform on your fellow-conspirators, then, if you do so, you're being a rat." Which is what, by his lights, he would have been had he coöperated with the authorities.

Liddy is clear that his loyalty to the President was not based upon anything as superficial as political sympathies. "I disagreed with him entirely on his domestic policies," he assures me. Were there circumstances in which he would have been disloyal to Nixon? "Well, only if I stumbled upon the fact that he was betraying the country to the K.G.B., or something like that," he says. Of course, Liddy's perspective on loyalty has the compounding irony that his own example contributed to its discredit: After all, if loyalty looks like Liddy, who needs it? But that does not lessen his nostalgia for what he regards as an increasingly endangered quality. "Although," he purrs, "there is the refreshing example of Susan McDougal."

BECAUSE Watergate really was a break point, Clinton's and Kennedy's people differ in their attitudes toward the public voicing of dissent. One member of the Kennedy Administration tells me he is dismayed by Stephanopoulos's behavior but isn't sure why. "I've been asking myself, 'Why am I troubled by it, if that's what he honestly feels? Should he suppress his honest feelings out of loyalty to the man to whom he owes so much?'" And the unspoken answer is: Well, yes. That's one of the reasons that the major Kennedy scandals—mostly about his putative sexual escapades—arose only posthumously. ("There were pretty girls around, but why not?" Schlesinger says, half-musingly. "It's remained a mystery to me how much was going on. And it never interfered with the course of business. I have the general feeling that questions which no one has a right to ask are not entitled to a truthful answer.") Even where there were grave differences over matters of principle and policy, the protocol used to be that you would quietly resign, citing family or other opportunities. "That's what people did in the Johnson Administration over Vietnam," Schlesinger says. "They got out." And, for the most part, kept quiet. Schlesinger mentions the study "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty," by the brilliant economist and social theorist Albert O. Hirschman; but in that book, published in 1970, Hirschman found reason to complain about a surfeit of political loyalty. Just think how relieved people would be, he wrote, "if at least one of the public officials 'dropping out' of the Johnson administration in disagreement over Vietnam had thereupon publicly fought official war policies." *Autres temps, autres mœurs.*

I got a sense of how far we've come when I spoke with Rahm Emanuel, a senior adviser to the President on policy and strategy, about the new style of political defection. He was philosophical about those who had left the fold ("You could point to Leon and George, but I could give you counter-examples, like Mickey Kantor and Harold Ickes"), and the ideological defectors plainly troubled him least. "Look, certain people in Health and Human Services resigned over the welfare bill, like Peter Edelman, who waited until after the election to do it," he said. "I respect him for it. I don't think that was disloyal, I think that was loyal. There was an idea that crossed a line for him, and he resigned because of it."

The perennial question, of course, is where the line is to be drawn. "It's easy to say you're for loyalty until loyalty conflicts with another value, and then you have to wrestle with those angels," Paul Begala says, voicing the post-Watergate consensus. Leon Panetta tells me that he doesn't see why institutional loyalties should trump basic convictions. "When you work within an operation, loyalty is owed and you have to defend what you have to defend," he says. "But you ought not to have to defend something that you don't believe. For one thing, you can't defend it very well. There is a line in your conscience that you shouldn't have to cross." He knows that some of his public comments in the wake of the Lewinsky affair haven't endeared him to Clinton's spin doctors, but, he insists, "whether you are inside or outside the operation, you owe it to people you work with to speak truthfully. And I am at peace with what I have said." George Stephanopoulos invokes the example of Bill Moyers, who was accused of betrayal when he left the Johnson Administration and made public his opposition to Vietnam: "He might have argued that he couldn't defend the indefensible after leaving, because there were other principles being violated, involving the morality of the war and the honesty of how it was talked about."

Indeed, everyone I spoke to who might have been accused of disloyalty invoked the primacy of principle, and even those whose loyalty has never been questioned discussed their loyalty as something to be piloted carefully around the shoals of principle. "Ask me if the President ever tested my loyalty, and the answer is yes," Carville says. "But not over sex. I was way more torn about cutting illegal immigrants off welfare—I was just ripped by it. I was way more upset about Dick Morris walking in and out of the Oval Office than about anything Monica Lewinsky might or might not have done."

"IN some respects, loyalty is more precious than ever, because there's so little of it," one disaffected former Clinton staffer tells me. "It's the law of supply and demand working." He sees the phenomenon of endemic disloyalty in economic terms, too. "Some of the former Clinton aides are paid large sums of money not because they have special insight into the real inner workings of what's going on but because they're in a position to dump shit on people they used to work for. That's what makes news, and that's what news organizations like. So there's a particular pressure on people now to establish themselves as independent voices, if they want to maintain paying jobs in the media. I mean, no one's going to make a career out of going out and being Bill Clinton's defender in the press. That's not where you make a career."

Stephanopoulos, for his part, plausibly defends himself against such implications. "Look at the history," he says. "First of all, I have a proven record of loyalty—I would say spotless in my time of service. Even after I left, I have never

A FALSE SPRING

(She who'd been taken
hostage—when?—been bound
and drugged, kept in all things
in the dark, now at last found
she'd begun to waken.)

So gently that year did
February come on, it teased
out the crocus, half-hid
in snow, gilded the willows, eased
the forsythia into bloom.

(But a good hard blow
sent her blindly back under.
Escape? A mere dream,
and that the dream came in a glow
of green, of gold, no wonder.)

—BRAD LEITHAUSER

gratuitously distanced myself for the sake of distancing myself, and to those who argue that it is simply a kind of calculated career move, then wouldn't I have done it over campaign finance, or Paula Jones, or all the other things for a year since I've been gone?"

For the people who remain, there is a different set of prizes and penalties. These are times when Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr, as if seeking to criminalize spinning, feels free to issue a summons to Sidney Blumenthal, an adviser to the President and an aggressive Clinton loyalist. "Loyalty has become illegal," Dick Morris declares flatly. "When you have a ubiquitous definition of illegality, where almost anything can be twisted to sound like illegality, and almost any comment can provide the basis for an investigation, then loyalty has become a crime." Thus Jesse Jackson says of Betty Currie, "Loyalty did not call for her to perjure herself. Nobody's paying her to lie."

If political loyalty once prospered and has now faltered, Morris would argue, it isn't because we're knaves and our predecessors were knights but because the institutional context has shifted. "If Ted Sorensen and Richard Goodwin were put under oath and asked on penalty of perjury whether they ever knew that John Kennedy had sex with somebody, they would answer the question and not go to jail," Morris maintains. John Dean, too, offers a pragmatic interpretation of why Kennedy's people stayed loyal: that preserving the Kennedy myth had a self-interested rationale. "If you take the people around Kennedy—like a Sorensen or a Schlesinger—and compare them to a Stephanopoulos or a Dee Dee Myers, it's a little bit of apples and oranges," he says. "First of all, they profited well from their relationship with Kennedy. They wrote books, they had stature and standing, and so they didn't want to tarnish Camelot." Today, of course, the incentives all run the other way. When it comes to disloyalty, you might say that the law and lucre are in collusion: on the one hand, the subpoena; on the other, the paycheck. A book, to be commercial, must be "candid"—forthcoming with compromising detail. It isn't rocket science. Telling means selling; reticence means remainders.

THE morality of the marketplace is a formidable thing. But it is uncomfortably appropriate that its most eloquent manifesto, "Free Agent Nation"—which recently appeared in the new-wave business magazine *Fast Company*—should have been written by a former chief speechwriter for Vice-President Al Gore, a man by the name of Daniel H. Pink. Pink argues that more and more of us live in a place he approvingly calls Free Agent, U.S.A. We're told that "free agents quickly realized that in the traditional world, they were silently accepting an architecture of work customs and social mores that should have crumbled long ago under the weight of its own absurdity." Pink quotes one free agent as saying, "A large organization is about submerging your own identity for the good of the company." Another free agent tells Pink, "In traditional companies... how [people] act is so frequently not who they are. They put on masks for eight hours." By contrast, Pink declares, "free agents gladly swap the false promise of security for the personal pledge of authenticity."

Free Agent, U.S.A., is, of course, the home of American atomism triumphant, supplanting the antiquated adhesions of personal loyalty with a shifting and provisional set of "strategic alliances." It's also an attitude that consorts oddly with the ethic of public service, to say the least. "A few months ago I was working in the White House," Pink chirrups. "But I'd grown tired—tired of politics in general and of office politics in particular, tired of doing assignments I didn't enjoy on a schedule I couldn't control, tired of wingtips that felt like vises and neckties that seemed like nooses.... So I left. On Independence Day, I became a free agent."

There's something breathtaking about this vision, and yet something altogether familiar, too. What becomes of loyalty to basic institutions when the only basic institution left is the self? In Free Agent, U.S.A., the distinction between analysts and the analyzed is as fluid as everything else, and horror at the employee who "submerges" her identity for the benefit of another implies approbation for those who "land on their feet": *CBS news analyst Rose Mary Woods joins us now with her perspective on a Presidency under siege. "Thanks, Walter. You know, I do think there's an awful lot of skepticism out there, and that if President Nixon is ever going to regain our trust he is really going to have to level with the American people."*

President Clinton isn't just the victim of this system; he may be its fore-

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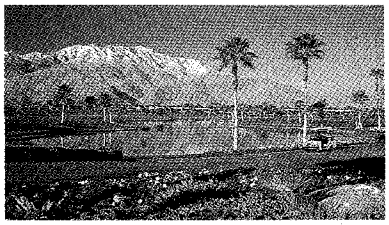

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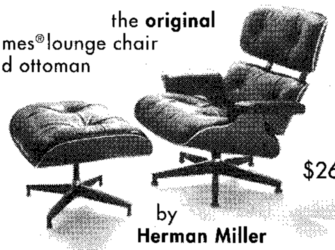

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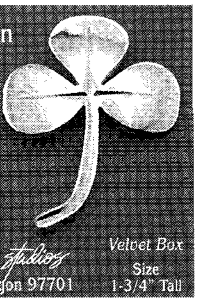

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most beneficiary, too. What the social scientist Mark Granovetter calls "the strength of weak ties" is a hallmark of contemporary institutional life. Casual and fleeting associations have become central to our careers, displacing the deeper and longer-term relations of old. (Such strong ties—and the paradigmatic strong tie is loyalty—require a degree of personal commitment to which contemporary life gives little support.) Prominent management gurus urge us to avoid "entanglement" in institutional loyalty, and instead cultivate a have-vita-will-travel attitude of versatility: you attain power not by putting down roots but by "networking." Where once safety and success were to be found in forging a rock-solid connection with some institutional center, now they're found in the accrual of acquaintanceships. And, of course, it's precisely Clinton's mastery at creating and sustaining weak ties—the fabled cascade of F.O.B.s—which has accounted for his political rise. In this sense, he is truly a child of his time. But weak ties don't grow stronger with proliferation: hence the unedifying spectacle of a man who, it sometimes seems, has thousands of friends and none at all.

How can loyalty—the morality of mine and thine—regain respect, in an era better versed in its costs than in its benefits? In the political context, Albert O. Hirschman himself has pointed out that there may be benefits of loyalty even to Administrations that are decidedly adrift. When people of conviction have made their exit, those remaining loyal may reason that they have to stay onboard to keep things from getting even worse. That sort of reasoning smacks of opportunism, and often it is. But not always. "The more wrongheaded and dangerous," Hirschman concedes, "the more we need *a measure of spinelessness* among the more enlightened policy makers so that some of them will still be 'inside' and influential when that potentially disastrous crisis breaks out." And, while we tend to think of loyalty as contravening legal authority, the law itself, with its antiquarian patina, may actually provide loyalty some sustenance. George Fletcher, in a thoughtful monograph on the subject, has offered a constitutional argument along these lines: "Relationships of loyalty should be entitled to be free of the state's intrusive hand, precisely as privacy has come to enjoy this principle of freedom from interference." And, for the same reasons that citizens enjoy a right against self-incrimination, Fletcher suggests that "the state should not force people to betray their commitments to their friends, lovers, family, community, or God."

The idea that the great goods of truth and justice should sometimes bow to personal loyalty is actually something that a lot of Americans—call us Kohlberg's primitives—take for granted. But, then, that's what accounts for the values gap between our nation's moral élite and the laggard souls they hope to edify. It explains why most Americans admired Hillary Clinton's staunch display of solidarity with her errant, embattled husband—a display that our high scorers knew to be worthy only of derision. It explains why most Americans were sickened when Kenneth Starr commanded Monica Lewinsky's mother to give testimony that might inculpate her daughter.

In what we might think of as Kenneth Starr's America—a nation where the imperative to root out "impropriety" gleefully sets secretaries against their bosses, friends against friends, mothers against daughters—personal loyalty has no place. For what is Starr but our legally deputized Stage Sixer, policing his fallen countrymen as they struggle with the gummy, vexed exigencies of the merely human? Starr's righteousness offends our sense of humanity not because it is feigned but because it isn't. "Ken Starr leaks that he stands by the river and listens to hymns," says Carville, who has perfect pitch for the idiom of sacralization. "I mean, come on: the river, the hymns, the cleansing . . . Here's a guy on a mission to cleanse the Potomac of the fornicators and sodomites who inhabit its banks, and we're not going to have any dick-sucking around here, no sir. People say, 'You gotta understand, Ken believes this.' I know Ken believes it! He believes it right to the core. That's the problem!" *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

And what about the rest of us, who prefer to distinguish politics from purification rites—and who just might, in a weak moment, rescue our own mothers from Godwin's burning house? There are alternatives. An appreciation of a richer social texture of trust and loyalty—of a social ethic founded upon the intricately reciprocal character of a life lived within community—doesn't mean setting the clock back to Camelot, either Kennedy's or Arthur's. But it does mean learning to talk about right and wrong without recourse to abstract principles. Like all values, the value of loyalty has its limits. (E. M. Forster's "What I Believe," with its oft-cited line about how he hoped he would have the guts to betray his country before he betrayed his friend, came out in 1938, which gave that credo a rather swift sell-by date.) But no rule book, no moral abacus, can specify which values must prevail in every instance. Often loyalty must give way to "principle"—this we know—but aren't there times, too, when principle must give way to loyalty?

You won't get an answer to that in Free Agent, U.S.A, but you just might in Alliance, Ohio, population 22,846, where Rose Mary Woods moved a few years ago to be closer to her family. She is seventy-nine, has been ailing for several years, and her voice is frail. When I reached her there the other day, we talked about the era of Murray Chotiner and those mid-century G.O.P. campaigns. Her manner was courtly and a little vague. Only when the subject of loyalty arose did a touch of steel enter her voice. "People should be loyal, or else they shouldn't take those jobs," she said. "Would *you* want someone working for you and learning all about you who wasn't loyal?" She made the observation in the tone of a schoolteacher explaining the order of the alphabet. It is the precept by which she lived her life, and as far as she's concerned she would do nothing differently. "I have," she says serenely, "no regrets whatsoever."

In an age of weak ties, of free agency triumphant, the virtues of adhesion can seem as fragile as the ozone layer. Awash in authenticity, we shall be true to ourselves until, perhaps, we come to realize that we have no selves worth being true to. Fortunately, our republic is marvellously self-correcting. Today, we may be nearly deafened by the clamor of revelation and unbridled self-assertion, but soon we will come to realize that free agency doesn't come free at all, and that there are times—as Rose Mary Woods knew better than anyone—when nothing is so eloquent as silence. ♦

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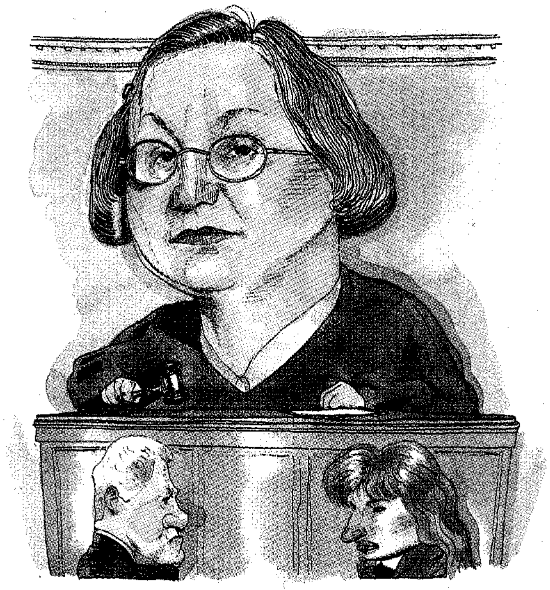
ANNALS OF LAW

PRESIDING OVER THE PRESIDENT

With Susan Wright for a judge, Bill Clinton's defense against Paula Jones doesn't look so bad.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN


Wright—confident, unbuttoned, and a little zany—is giving both sides the kind of trial neither expected.

BARRY BLITT

THE five-story federal courthouse in Little Rock, Arkansas, is usually a sleepy place, but it is different these days—at least, on the third floor. There, a United States Marshal is posted outside the chambers of Judge Susan Webber Wright, and the guard shoos away a steady procession of journalists and curiosity-seekers. To discourage loiterers, authorities have even posted an "Out of Order" sign on a pay telephone near the Judge's office, although the phone works perfectly.

On May 27th, Bill Clinton will become the first President to be tried in open court, which alone would guarantee worldwide attention to the case and its presiding judge. But this trial, which will take place in Susan Webber Wright's court, promises to be a sensational one: not only does it focus on an allegation of crude sexual misconduct by Bill Clinton but it has spawned the criminal investigation that centers on the former White House intern Monica Lewinsky. There may never have been a civil trial in this country that was played for higher stakes. By some reckonings, the trial will air, if not answer, most of the provocative questions about Bill Clinton's private life and sexual behavior—and in that way affect the President's ability to govern effectively.

However, an examination of Judge Wright's performance in the Paula Jones case—and of her life and career—suggests that those who hope for a lengthy trial, replete with tawdry testimony, will be disappointed. Rather, it now appears likely that it will be narrowly focussed, tightly controlled, and very short. A nation used to high-profile cases measured in weeks, if not months, may find this one resolved in a few days. Indeed, in the nearly four years since the Jones case was filed, Susan Wright has attempted at every opportunity to focus the issues and limit the scope of the case. She has acted like a classic trial judge: simplifying, managing, attempting to identify and resolve the key issues raised by a tangled lawsuit. If this keeps up, it will probably enhance both her own reputation and that of the federal judiciary as a whole. It could also be very good news for Bill Clinton.

JUDGE WRIGHT will preside over Jones v. Clinton because last May 27th the United States Supreme Court decided, unanimously, that Paula Jones's sexual-harassment case should proceed to trial even while Clinton remained in office. In what is likely to be judged one of the Court's more dubious decisions, Justice John Paul Stevens, in his opinion, brushed aside suggestions that the case might interfere with the conduct of the Presidency. The decision reads as if the trial will practically pass unnoticed,

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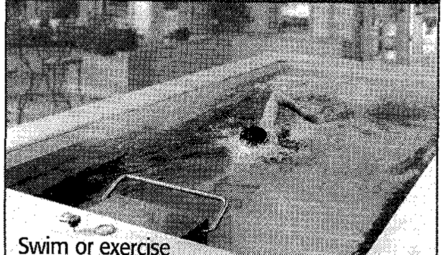

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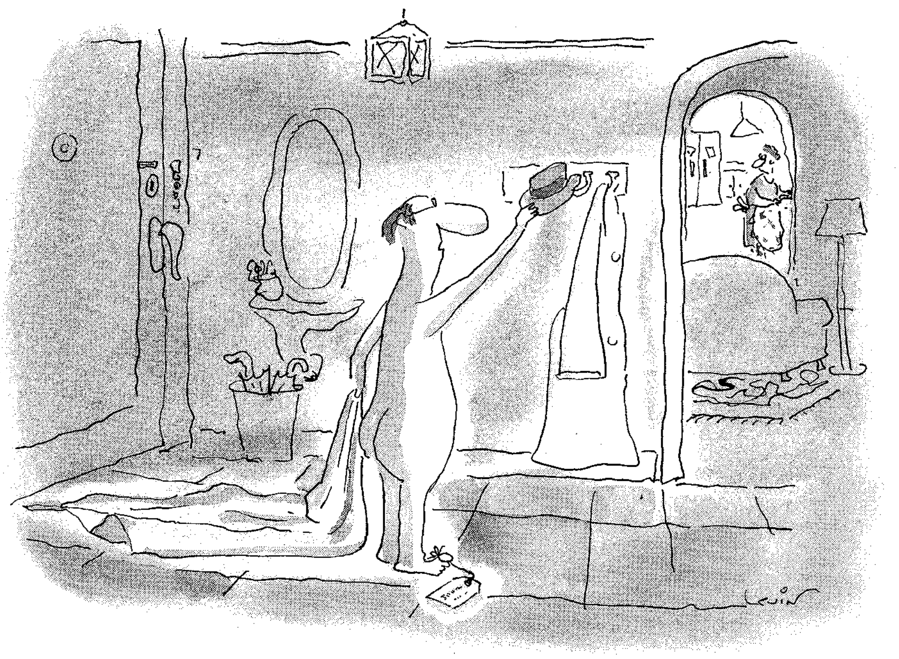


"Whew! I had a close call today."

• •

much like a Law of the Sea conference in The Hague, and the opinion reflects the fact that only two of the present Justices have served as trial-court judges, and their personal experiences as trial lawyers range from meagre to nonexistent. In their cloister at the Supreme Court Building, the Justices may honestly have believed that this legal bacchanal could proceed decorously to trial.

Susan Wright appears to have no such illusions; although the case has been pending for so long, the Judge has presided over just one public court session—last August 22nd, which was also her forty-ninth birthday. Her remarks then, which largely escaped public notice, may have amounted to the most important utterances on the case to date.

Judge Wright is known to the public mostly through newspaper photographs, in which she appears to be something of a schoolmarm—all pinched and nervous severity. She holds her hair back with barrettes; her hooded eyes peer out from small, metal-rimmed spectacles. The details are the same in person, but the impression she leaves could not be more different. Susan Webber Wright is confident, funny, unbuttoned, and even a little zany. This is a judge who, after a long and frustrating trial day, will announce to a jury, "I'm going to go home and abuse alcohol." Everyone knows it's a joke, but it's not one that most federal judges would make.

Above all, though, there is a direct, down-to-earth quality about a Wright proceeding. Last August, in her single public pronouncement on Jones v. Clinton, she briskly told the lawyers how she saw the case unfolding. "I would like for you all to pull out your calendars," Wright said, and then she announced, "What I would hope we could do is try this case in five or six days. It doesn't look like a case that's worth any more than that to me. Does anyone disagree with that?"

Wright's tone made clear that she was not asking for a debate, and no one objected. Besides, the lawyers in her courtroom looked too stunned to respond. By limiting the trial to about a week, Wright was saying that she was going to sharply curtail the number of witnesses that each side could call. Wright will, it appears, allow the parties to testify, hear any corroborating evidence of the alleged hotel-room incident itself, and then ask the jury to decide who is telling the truth.

Neither side expected the trial to go this way. In preparing for trial through depositions and discovery, Jones's legal team, which is funded in part by the conservative Rutherford Institute, is devoting extraordinary resources to searching out purported sexual partners of the President, in the hope of proving that his alleged approach to Jones reflects a pattern of behavior. (This process included the issuing of a subpoena to Monica Lewinsky, which led to Kenneth Starr's investigating whether the President and his friend Vernon Jordan made unlawful attempts to influence her testimony.) Similarly, the Clinton team has scoured Jones's sexual history, in an apparent attempt to show that she might have solicited Clinton's attentions. Both sides seem to have been wasting their time. By last August, it appears, Judge Wright had decided that Jones v. Clinton was going to cover little more than the events of May 8, 1991, at the Excelsior Hotel.

This is the kind of trial the Clinton team wanted all along. "We've always seen sex in this case as a nuclear deterrent," a person familiar with Clinton's strategy in the case told me. "We had to make sure we could retaliate if they wanted to get into his sex life, but we'd always preferred that she just rule the whole thing off limits. If it's just her word against his, and she's got to persuade twelve people from Arkansas that she's telling the truth and he's lying, well, we'll take our chances with that case."

THERE is some irony in the Judge's making such a significant ruling in favor of the President. In light of the strange intersections between the lives of Susan Webber Wright and Bill Clinton in Arkansas's famously incestuous political culture, the President's lawyers might have made a pretty good case for the Judge's recusal.

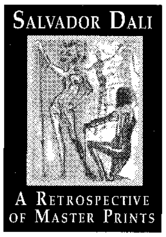
Susan Webber was the first of two daughters born to an up-and-coming young lawyer and his wife in Texarkana. Tom Webber, whose firm was known for producing civic leaders and judges, died when Susan was sixteen. His widow, forced to provide for Susan and her sister, Missy, went to work at a local bank. Fortunately, Susan excelled at school, and won a scholarship to Randolph-Macon Woman's College, in Lynchburg, Virginia, and afterward she won another, to continue her studies for a master's in public administration at the University of Arkansas. She then enrolled in the university's law school and split the costs with her mother, paying her portion with earnings from summer jobs and part-time work. Susan became the first woman to edit the *Law Review* and was in the running to be the class valedictorian.

It was then that she played a role in an early Clinton legend. In 1973, following his graduation from Yale Law School, Clinton went home to teach at the University of Arkansas law school. The next year, Susan Webber took Professor Clinton's course in admiralty law—a subject that was apparently of little interest in this landlocked state. Toward the end of the semester, Clinton turned his attention to what became his first political campaign, against the Republican Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt. Clinton was so distracted that, as Susan's husband, Robert Wright, told me, "he lost some of the final exams, and one of them was hers."

As Robert Wright, who teaches law at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, recalled, the twenty-six-year-old Hillary Rodham tried to help her future husband by proposing a deal: "They offered her a B-plus, but Susan insisted on taking a new admiralty exam. She needed a better grade if she was going to have a chance of graduating first." Susan Webber, who got an A but missed out on getting the top position, immediately went to work as a volunteer on the successful reëlection campaign of Representative Hammerschmidt. Clinton's first political success came two years later, in 1976, when he was elected the state's attorney general.

At that point, though, Susan Webber largely withdrew from most political activity. She became a professor at the law school of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and earned a solid, if unspectacular, reputation as a scholar in oil-and-gas law. In 1988, she dipped back into politics, heading a local organization of lawyers for George Bush, and two years later she was rewarded with a federal judgeship, largely through the sponsorship of the then ranking Republican official in the state—Representative Hammerschmidt.

When Wright received that appointment, she had virtually no experience as a trial lawyer, and was greeted with some suspicion by the Little Rock bar. However, she has mostly won over lawyers across the political spectrum with her pragmatic style. She has organized her office into a miniature—and rather egalitarian—law firm. She works without a secretary, using the money in her budget to pay a third law clerk. She treats the clerks, two of whom have been with her



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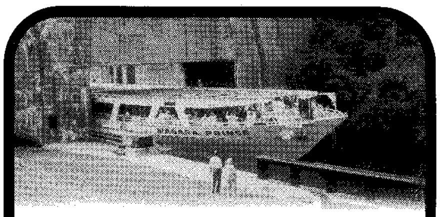

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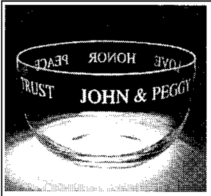

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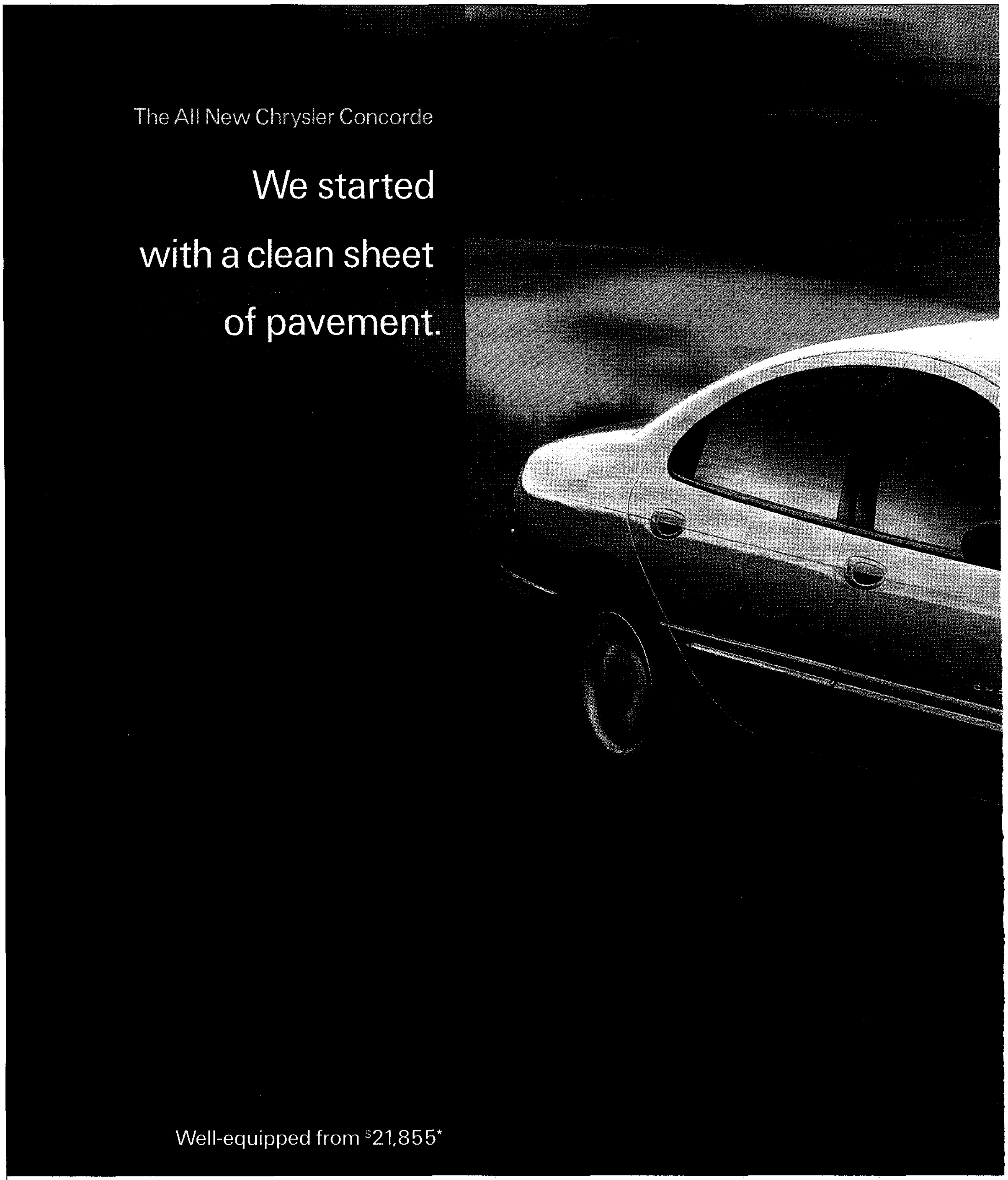
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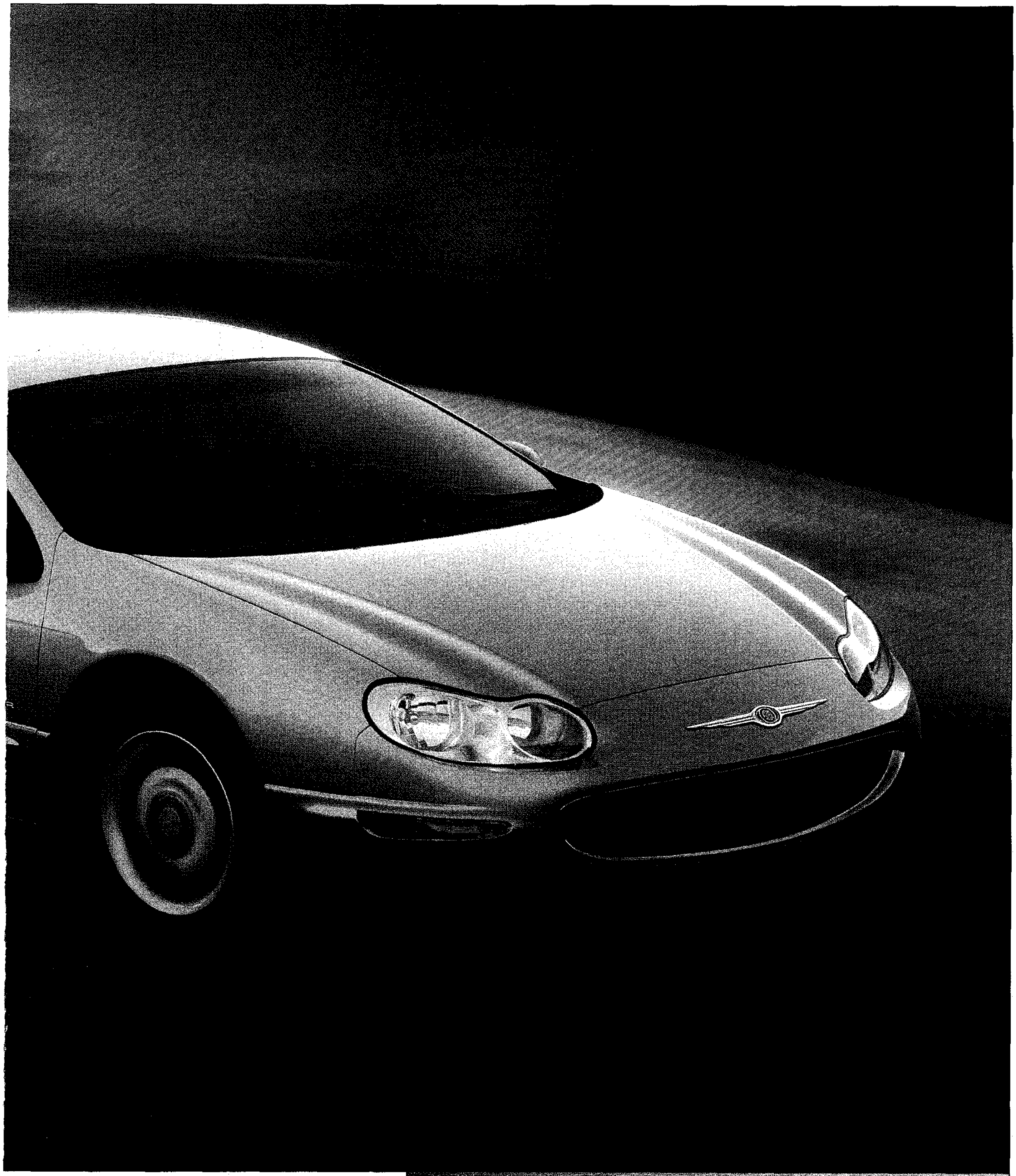

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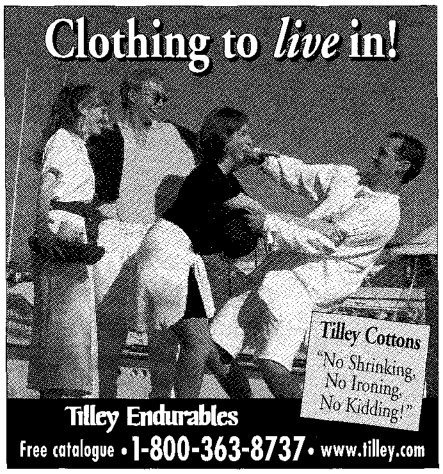

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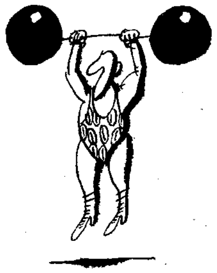
for more than five years, as virtual peers, and vice versa. Her clerk Barry Ward buzzes his boss on the intercom and summons her—"Can you come in here?"—and the Judge swiftly materializes. In the courtroom, Wright regales spectators with details of her domestic arrangements, such as who will be able to pick up her eleven-year-old daughter, Robin, at her piano lesson. These monologues sometimes disconcert Little Rock's starchy legal community, but they endear Wright to jurors, who sense a woman who is comfortable in her own skin.



The Clinton scandals have formed a leitmotiv of Wright's years on the bench. She is the supervising judge of the grand jury investigating Whitewater in Little Rock. At the request of Kenneth Starr, Wright has kept Susan McDougal, the President's former business partner in the Whitewater development, in prison for seventeen months because of her refusal to testify with immunity before the grand jury. In the summer of 1996, she presided over the second major Whitewater trial, of the Arkansas bankers Herby Branscum, Jr., and Robert M. Hill, on charges that they tried to conceal from regulators certain transactions concerning the 1990 Clinton gubernatorial campaign. That trial ended in a major defeat for Starr's team—the first trial in the history of the independent-counsel law to end without convictions on any count.

In recent weeks, Starr has drawn considerable criticism for excessive zeal in his pursuit of the President. There is some evidence that Judge Wright—like the jury in her courtroom which rejected Starr's prosecution—also regards his efforts with some skepticism. On January 28th, in the feverish first days after the Lewinsky investigation began, Starr's office made a dramatic request of the Judge—asking that she halt all depositions in the Jones case, on the ground that the civil case was interfering with the criminal probe. "The pending criminal investigation is of such gravity and paramount importance," Starr's brief intoned, "that this court would do a disservice to the nation if it were to permit the unfettered—and extraordinarily aggressive—discovery efforts currently under way to proceed unabated."

The next day, however, Wright coolly rejected Starr's demand—in a way that said much about how she approaches the Jones case. The Judge let discovery proceed, but ruled that "any evidence concerning Ms. Lewinsky shall be excluded" from the trial of Jones v. Clinton. In other words, Jones's lawyers will not be allowed to argue that Clinton's overtures to Lewinsky (if any) represented part of a pattern in his dealings with women in his employ. It was a major victory for the Clinton team—and another effort by the Judge to streamline the case. (Jones's lawyers have asked her to reconsider this ruling.)

To be sure, Judge Wright has ruled against Clinton on occasion. On February 10th, she turned down the President's request to advance the trial date from May 27th. In her ruling, Wright listed the outstanding issues in the case which she needed to resolve before trial and explained that she needed ample time to give them "careful and reasoned consideration." The message to the parties was tart: she, not the lawyers, was in charge of this case.

Clinton's lawyers, in their motion to move up the trial date, spoke of the "gossip, innuendo, and hearsay" that were being reported in the press about the Jones case. In her written opinion, the Judge went out of her way to agree with "the President's admittedly valid concerns about the current state of journalism."

The Judge may have been speaking from personal experience. The day before, Lois Romano, of the Washington *Post*, published an extraordinarily candid interview with the Judge's husband. Robert Wright had talked about advising his wife on the Jones case, had admitted that he met with the lawyers in the case, and had seemed to disparage the President personally, saying, "From what I've heard, a lot of Bill Clinton's women have been satisfied customers."

I met with Robert Wright on the day the interview appeared and found him shaken by it. On that day, he took down a photocopy of a letter to his wife which had been posted on his bulletin board—a fund-raising appeal from the Rutherford Institute. The envelope bore the words "An important message from Paula Jones about her case against Bill Clinton." According to Professor Wright, "It was there to entertain the students. It didn't seem right to joke about it anymore."

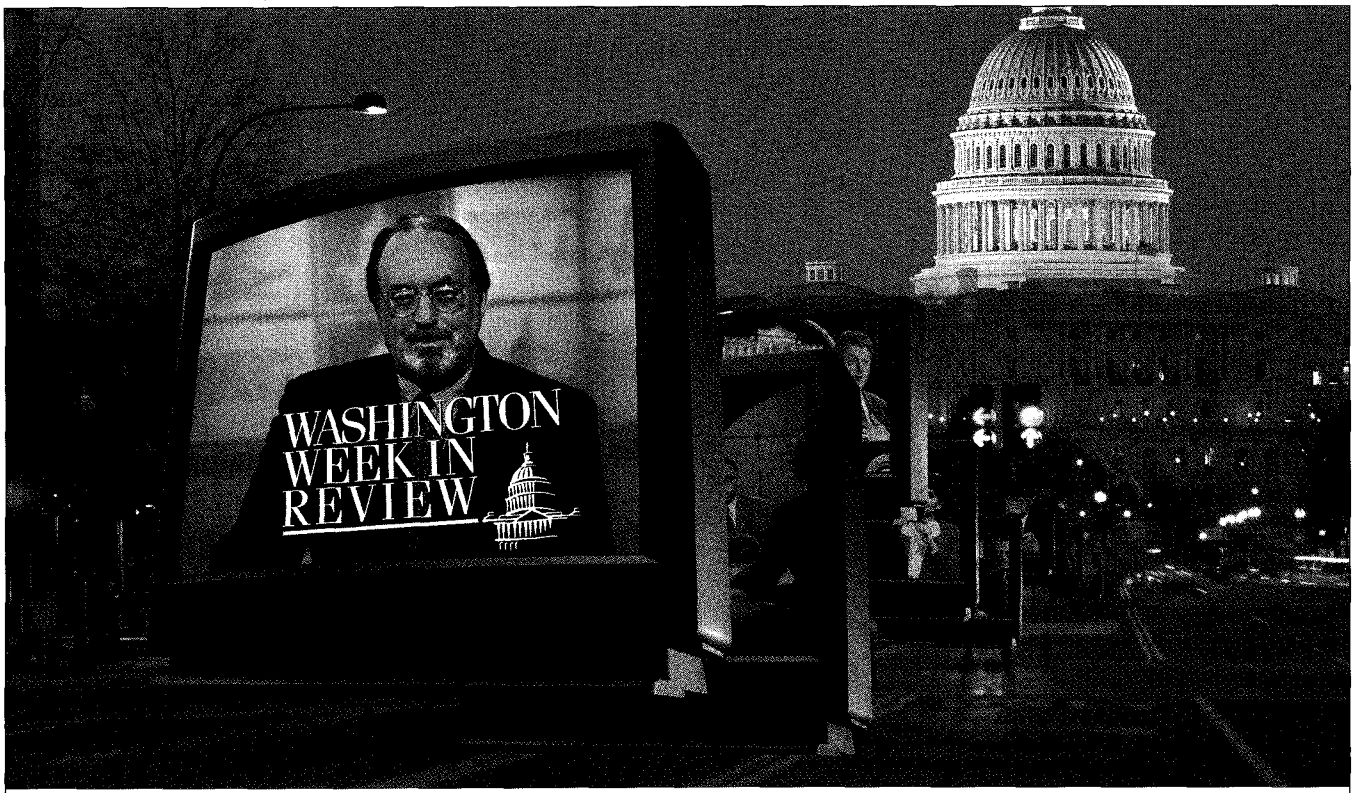
He complained halfheartedly that the *Post* had printed comments he meant to be off the record, but mostly he seemed angry at himself for embarrassing his wife. (The professor's meeting with the lawyers in the case seems benign. He had just taken his wife to lunch on her birthday, and she introduced him during a nonsubstantive get-acquainted session in her chambers.)

Robert Wright did say—and repeated for me—that the public should not expect a detailed exploration of the President's sex life during the trial. "She is going to keep it pretty tight," he said. On February 17th, the President's lawyers filed a motion for summary judgment, and the result of Clinton's motion may be an even tighter case.

Judge Wright is known to have referred privately to the Jones case as one about "sex discrimination" rather than "sex harassment." In practical terms, this nomenclature suggests that she views the central issue to be whether Paula Jones suffered any tangible harm in her workplace—not whether Bill Clinton made an awkward pass. This view should be welcomed by Clinton's lawyers. In fact, in their motion for summary judgment, they argued that, regardless of what happened in the hotel room, Clinton neither subjected Jones to "quid pro quo" harassment nor created a "hostile work environment" for her. The heart of Clinton's argument is that in Jones's two years as a state employee she did not suffer in any tangible way because of her purported encounter with the then Governor—thus, there was not the "severe or pervasive" injury that the law specifies.

Clinton's lawyers sought to embarrass Jones by including in their motion a few unflattering details from her deposition in the case—such as her distress at not receiving flowers on Secretary's Day. It appears, however, that the Jones team plans to pay Clinton back in kind—by quoting from Clinton's deposition in their reply, which is due on March 13th. "It's only fair that people see both sides," I was told by John Whitehead, who is the president of the Rutherford Institute. Even if Judge Wright dismisses the sexual-harassment count, Jones may still be able to pursue her allegation of "outrage," also known as intentional infliction of emotional distress. However, if the trial is to be based solely on that diminished claim the jury cannot award Jones her attorneys' fees, and that fact might prompt her lawyers to reach an out-of-court settlement. (Last week, it was widely reported that the Clinton team had made an offer to settle the case after the Lewinsky investigation began in January, but no agreement was reached.)

On the eve of receiving Clinton's motion, Judge Wright was preoccupied with a wrongful-death suit by the family of a man whose pickup truck was struck by a train in a hamlet called Bay. That case was soon settled, though, and Wright was free, once more, to turn her attention to the President of the United States. It is a difficult business to predict what any jurist will do, but Clinton's motion does seem well tailored to the predilections of this Judge. It may be that Susan Wright will give Paula Jones the advice that, in effect, she herself took two decades ago when her bumbling law professor lost her exam: make your best deal, but don't make a federal case of it. ♦



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ANNALS OF WARFARE

THE BIOWEAPONEERS

In the last few years, Russian scientists have invented the world's deadliest plagues. Have we learned about this too late to stop it?

BY RICHARD PRESTON

KEN ALIBEK is a quiet man, forty-seven years old, with youthful looks and an attractive, open face. He lives in a rented condominium in Arlington, Virginia, a five-minute walk from his office at a private consulting firm. Alibek has dark hair and Asian features, and a dimpled scar on his nose, which he got in an accident that was "not heroic," he says, involving a machine in a biowarfare plant.

Before he arrived in the United States, in 1992, Ken Alibek was Dr. Kanatjan Alibekov, the first deputy chief of research and production for the Soviet biological-weapons program. He was the top scientist in the program, a sprawling, clandestine enterprise known as Biopreparat, or The System, by the scientists who worked in it. Biopreparat research-and-production facilities were flung all across the Soviet Union. As Dr. Alibekov, Ken Alibek had thirty-two thousand scientists and staff people working under him.

Alibek has a Doctor of Sciences degree in anthrax. It is a kind of super-degree, which he received in 1988, at the age of thirty-seven, for directing the research team that developed the Soviet Union's most powerful weapons-grade anthrax. He did this research as head of the Stepnagorsk bioweapons facility, in what is now Kazakhstan, which was once the largest biowarfare production facility in the world. The Alibekov anthrax became fully operational in 1989. It is an amber-gray powder, finer than bath talc, with smooth, creamy particles that tend to fly apart and vanish in the air, becoming invisible and drifting for miles. The Alibekov anthrax is four times more efficient than the standard product.

Ken Alibek is part of a diaspora of biologists who came out of Russia following the breakup of the Soviet Union. Government funding for research decreased dramatically, and scientists who were working in the biowarfare program found themselves without jobs. Some of them went looking abroad. A few have come to the United States or Great Britain, but most went elsewhere. "No one knows where they are," Alibek says. One can guess that they've ended up in Iraq, Syria, Libya, China, Iran, perhaps Israel, perhaps India—but no one really knows, probably not even the Russian government. No doubt some of these biologists have carried the Alibekov formula in their heads, if not master seed strains of the anthrax and samples of the finished product in containers. The Alibekov anthrax may be one of the more common bioweapons in the world today. It seems plausible that Iraqi biologists, for instance, know the Alibekov formula by now.

One day, Ken Alibek and I were sitting in a conference room near his office talking about the anthrax he and his research team had developed. "It's very difficult to say if I felt a sense of excitement over this. It's very difficult to say *what* I felt like," he said. "It wouldn't be true to say that I thought I was doing something wrong. I thought I had done something very important. The anthrax was one of my scientific results—my personal result."

I asked him if he'd tell me the formula for his anthrax.

"I can't say this," he answered.

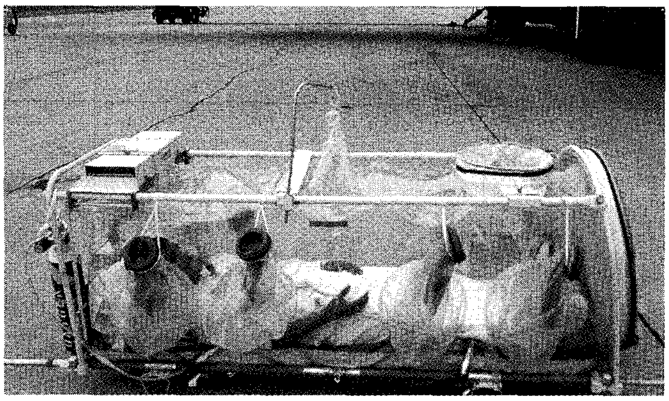
"I won't publish it. I'm just curious," I said.

"Look, you must understand, this is unbelievably serious. You can't publish this formula," he said. When I assured him I wouldn't, he told me the formula for the Alibekov anthrax. He uttered just one sentence. The Alibekov anthrax is simple, and the formula is somewhat surprising, not quite what you'd expect. Two unrelated materials are mixed with pure powdered anthrax spores. It took a lot of research and testing to get the trick right, and Alibek must have driven his research group hard and skillfully to arrive at it. "There are many countries that would like to know how to do this," he said.

UNTIL last week, when Ken Alibek was interviewed on "PrimeTime Live," he was known in this country only to a few government officials and intelligence experts and defense-industry figures. What he told the C.I.A. and other people with national-security clearances was usually classified. Sometimes the information was so secret that even he couldn't look at his reports once they were issued. "The first report I wrote, I only saw it once from across a room. It was sitting on a table. They wouldn't let me go any closer to it," Alibek says, with a tiny smile.

What Alibek describes is shocking, even to those who thought they had a pretty good idea of what bioweapons are out there and who has them. But it is particularly timely now that the public's attention has suddenly focussed on the possibility of biological terrorism, which gained a peculiar intensity in late February, when Larry Wayne Harris and William Leavitt, Jr., were arrested by the F.B.I. outside Las Vegas with what was thought to be weapons-grade anthrax in the trunk of a car. The repeated news reports—which turned out to be a false alarm—that they were planning a terrorist attack on the New York City subway system clarified what had seemed to be a vague threat hidden in Iraq. Bioterror had come home.

I first heard about Ken Alibek in 1995, although at that time none of my contacts would tell me his name. He was referred to only as No. 2. (Biodefector No. 1 had come out in 1989.) Last fall, when I finally figured out that No. 2 was Alibekov, I called up a source who has connections to British intelligence and told him I thought I knew who No. 2 was. He cut me off. “Don’t say a name,” he said. “I can’t confirm anything. Have you forgotten that we are talking on an open telephone line?” That source went nowhere, but then I had an idea. For several years, I have known a man named William C. Patrick III, who in certain important respects is the leading American expert on biological weapons. Before 1969, when President Richard Nixon shut down the American biowarfare program, Bill Patrick was the chief of product development for the United States Army’s biological-warfare laboratories at Fort Detrick, Maryland. The “products” that Patrick and his research group developed were powdered spores and viruses that were loaded into bombs and sophisticated delivery systems. Patrick was arguably the top bioweaponeer in the United States. He and several hundred other scientists and research-staff members lost their jobs when the biowarfare facilities at Fort Detrick were closed down. (Today, to the best of my knowledge, the scientists at the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, or USAMRIID, at Fort Detrick don’t make offensive bioweapons. They develop vaccines and treatments to defend against them. As far as I can tell, the United States has no bioweapons, and one piece of evidence for this is that government officials today are remarkably ignorant of them.)



Clockwise from right: Dr. Ken Alibek and William Patrick, photographed by David Burnett; a member of the U.S. Army medical evacuation team during a contamination drill; and a magnified view of anthrax bacteria.

LEFT: (TOP) PHOTO RESEARCHERS; (BOTTOM) KAREN KASMAUSKI/MATRIX

Bill Patrick, who is now seventy-one years old, is one of only two or three scientists still alive and active in the United States who have a hands-on technical understanding of bioweapons. As he explained to me, “There’s a hell of a disconnect between us fossils who know about biological weapons and the younger generation.” In 1991, on the eve of the Gulf War, he was summoned to the Pentagon to take part in a discussion of anthrax. Patrick sat in silence while a group of intelligence analysts, young men and women dressed in suits, discussed anthrax in knowledgeable-sounding voices. “I reached the conclusion that these people didn’t know what the hell they were talking about,” Patrick recalls. He said, “Have any of you fellows actually seen anthrax?” and he reached into his pocket and pulled out a small jar of amber-brown powder, and hucked it across the table. It rattled and bounced toward the analysts. They jerked away, some leaping to their feet. The jar contained anthrax simulant, a biopowder that is essentially identical to anthrax except that it doesn’t kill. It is used for experiments in which properties other than infectivity are being tested. “I got that through security, by the way,” Patrick observed.

Later, Bill Patrick was the oldest United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq. The Iraqis knew exactly who he was—the former top scientist in the former American bioweapons program. Iraqi intelligence people started calling his hotel room in Baghdad at night, hissing, “You son of bitch, Patrick,” and then hanging up. “It was kind of an honor, but it kept me awake,” he says.

Today, Bill Patrick is a consultant to many government agencies—the C.I.A., the F.B.I., the Defense Intelligence Agency, the City of New York—on the use of biological weapons in a terrorist attack. Jerome Hauer, who is the head of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani’s Office of Emergency Management—the group that would handle a bioterror event in New York, should one ever happen—said to me once, “Bill Patrick is one of the only guys who can tell us about some of these biological agents. We all wonder what we’re going to do when he decides to light up a cigar and go sailing.” Patrick is able to tell emergency planners what will happen if a biological weapon is released in an American city—how many people will die, where they’ll die, what the deaths

"Thanks again. You've got a great house and a fun care provider."

will look like. His reports are classified.

Bill Patrick and Ken Alibek were counterparts. They had been two of the top scientists in what had been the best biowarfare programs on the planet. I speculated that Patrick might know Alibek.

"Do I know Ken?" Patrick boomed over the telephone. "We're close friends! My wife and I had Ken over for Christmas this year with our family, because we think he's kind of lonely."

Then I thought I understood: Patrick must have participated in the long government discussions with Alibek—the debriefing—that would have taken place after his arrival in the United States. No one else in the U.S. government, not a single soul, would have understood so clearly what Alibek was talking about. The two scientists had become friends during the process.

I DROVE down to Bill Patrick's house, in Maryland, on a misty day in winter, when leafless white-oak trees and poplars lay in a haze across the slopes of Catoctin Mountain. The clouds pulled apart and the sun appeared, gleaming through cirrus like a nickel. Patrick's house is a modern version of a Swiss chalet, with a view of Fort Detrick and rolling countryside.

"Come in, young man," Patrick said genially. A small dog was yapping around his feet. Patrick has a gentlemanly manner, a rather blocky face, with hair combed over a bald head, and penetrating greenish eyes. He glanced at the sky and seemed to sniff the air before ushering me into the house. He is exquisitely sensitive to weather.

Alibek arrived a short while later, driving a silver BMW. After lunch, we settled down around the kitchen table. Patrick brought out a bottle of Glenmorangie Scotch whiskey, and we poured ourselves a round. It seemed a very Russian thing to do. The whiskey was smoky and golden, and it moved the talk forward.

"You know, I'm disappointed the agency didn't do better by you, Ken," Patrick remarked. He turned to me. "They let him sign up for all these credit cards."

Alibek smiled wryly. "This was a problem." The C.I.A. had introduced him to Visa. "I could buy things with the cards, but it didn't seem like money. Then I found out you have to pay for it later."

Alibek speaks English with a mild Russian accent that makes his serious manner seem almost gloomy. He often has a cigarette smoldering between his fingertips, but he works out at a health club, and he has broad, firm shoulders. His brown eyes seem sombre, and he wears black wire-rimmed eyeglasses. He favors linen shirts with band collars, and soft wool-piqué jackets in dark, muted colors. He has a calm expression, with a downward-glancing gaze, and he looks vaguely Chinese. Ethnically, he is a Kazakh. He was born and raised in Kazakhstan. In Russia, he was twenty-five pounds heavier, really quite stout, but he says that he is a different person now, even physically.

I asked Alibek how he feels about living here. "I'm happy I'm not doing the work," he said. He paused. "I'm not one hundred per cent happy. I know how people feel about me in Russia. Some of my scientific colleagues feel I am a betrayer." Alibek keeps his emotions well hidden, perhaps even from himself. He does not laugh easily. When he does laugh, he is clearly enjoying himself, but his body is slightly rigid. He quit Biopreparat in 1991, left Russia with his family, and abruptly ended up in the United States. According to Alibek, some of his former colleagues at Biopreparat—which was privatized—sent word through intermediaries that "if you ever come to Russia you can expect some problems."

"I've got no desire to go to Russia," Alibek said, shrugging. He recently separated from his wife, although they enjoy a cordial relationship. She lives near him with their two boys, whom he sees almost every day. His oldest child, a daughter, is studying architecture at an Ivy League university. At times, Alibek has suffered from loneliness and a sense of dislocation, and he has had some concerns about how he will support his wife and children in the United States. The Alibeks had a privileged life in Russia, with drivers to take them everywhere and all the money they could use. The United States government paid him consulting fees while he was briefing scientists and officials, but now he is on his own.

KEN ALIBEK was raised in Alma-Ata, then the capital of Kazakhstan. Alma-Ata is in central Asia, not far from the Chinese border, on the medieval silk route. His first language was Kazakh, and he learned Russian at school. He got a medical degree at the military medical institute at Tomsk. His special interest was infectious-disease epidemiology. At some point while he was still in medical school, he was chosen to work for Biopreparat. Since it was a secret system, you didn't really apply; you were approached and brought in. He rose fast. In 1982, at the age of thirty-one, he became the acting director of the Omutninsk bioweapons-production plant, a major facility in the Kirov region of Russia. Eventually, he ended up working in Biopreparat's headquarters, a large building in Moscow—the same building where Biopreparat is situated today.

In early April of 1988, Ken Alibek received a telephone call in his office in Moscow. It came from his friend and colleague Lev Sandakhchiev, the director of a Biopreparat facility called Vector, a huge, isolated virology-research campus in the larch forests outside Novosibirsk, a city in western Siberia. In the late nineteen-eighties, Vector was devoted largely to the development and production of virus weapons. (Dr. Sandakhchiev denies this.) Dr. Sandakhchiev reported that there had been an accident. He was reluctant to discuss it on the telephone.

"Send me the details in a cryptogram," Alibek said. Once a day for the next fourteen days, Alibek received a new cryptogram about the victim of the accident, Dr. Nikolai Ustinov.

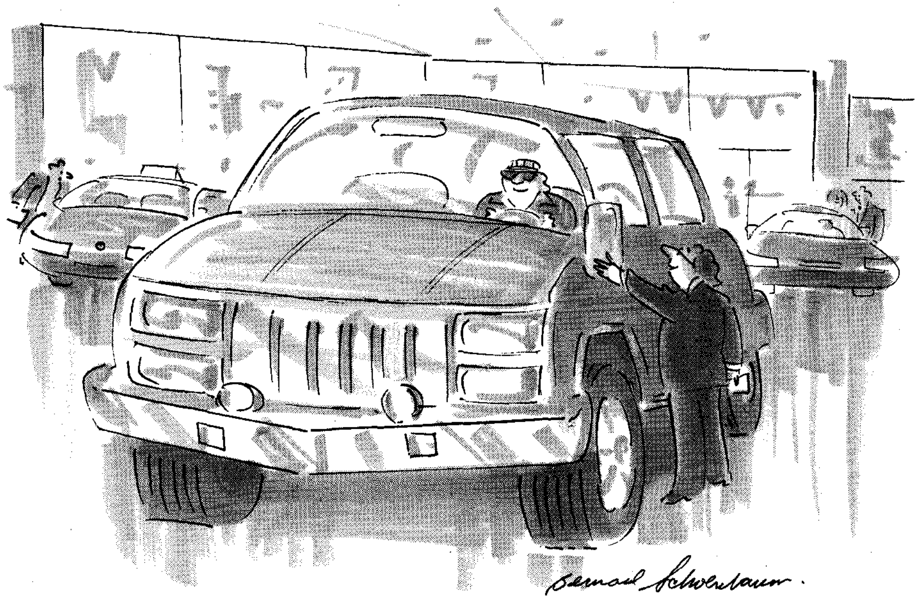
Dr. Ustinov was forty-four years old. Alibek recalls him as a fair-skinned man with light-brown hair, ethnically a Russian. He had a wife and children. Alibek thought of him as a good guy and a talented scientist, easy to talk with, receptive to new ideas. Ustinov had been doing basic military research on the Marburg virus, studying its potential as a weapon. The long-term goal was to see if it could be loaded into special biological warheads on the MIRV missiles that were aimed at the United States. (A MIRV has multiple warheads, which are directed at different targets.) At the time, the Soviet biological missile warheads were designed to be loaded with strategic/operational smallpox virus, Black Death, and anthrax. The Marburg virus had potential for weaponization, too. Marburg is a close cousin to the Ebola virus, and is extremely lethal. Dr. Ustinov had been wearing a spacesuit in a Level 4 hot lab, injecting guinea pigs with Marburg virus. He pricked himself in the finger with a needle, and it penetrated two layers of rubber gloves.

Nikolai Ustinov exited through an air lock and a chemical decon shower to Level 3, and used an emergency telephone to call his supervisor. The supervisor decided to put Ustinov into a biocontainment hospital, a twenty-bed unit with steel air-lock doors, like the doors of a submarine, where nurses and doctors wearing spacesuits could monitor him. He was not allowed to speak with his wife and children. Ustinov did not seem to be afraid of dying, but, separated from his family, he became deeply depressed.

On about the fourth day, Ustinov developed a headache, and his eyes turned red. Tiny hemorrhages were occurring in them. He requested a laboratory notebook, and he began writing a diary in it, every day. He was a scientist, and he was determined to explain how he was dying. What does it feel like to die of Marburg virus? What are the psychological effects? For a while, he maintained a small hope that he wouldn't die, but when his skin developed spontaneous bruises he understood what the future held. Dr. Sandakhchiev's cryptograms to Alibek were dry and factual, and didn't include the human details. Alibek would later learn that perhaps twice Ustinov had broken down and wept.

Alibek was frantic to get help to Ustinov. He begged the Ministry of Defense for a special immune serum, but bureaucratic delays prevented its arrival in Siberia until it was too late. When Ustinov began to vomit blood and pass bloody black diarrhea, the doctor gave him transfusions, but as they put the blood into him it came out of his mouth and rectum. Ustinov was in prostration. They debated replacing all the blood in his body with fresh new blood—a so-called whole-body transfusion. They were afraid that that might trigger a total flooding hemorrhage, which would kill him, so they didn't do it.

ALIBEK did not know exactly which strain of Marburg had infected his colleague. It had been obtained by Soviet intelligence somewhere, but the scientists were never told where strains came from. The Marburg virus seems to live in an unknown animal host in East Africa. It has been associated with Kitum Cave, near Mt. Elgon, so the Soviet strain could have been obtained around there, but Alibek suspected that it came from Germany. In 1967, the virus had broken out at a vaccine factory in Marburg, a small city in central Germany, and had killed a number of people who were working with monkeys that were being used to produce vaccine. One of the survivors was a man named Popp, and Alibek thought that Ustinov was probably



"It's a vehicle suitable for both the defensive and the offensive driver."

dying of the strain that had come from him.

I have seen a photograph of a Marburg monkey worker taken shortly before his death, in late summer, 1967. He is a stout man, lying on a hospital bed without a shirt. His mouth is slack, his teeth are covered with blood. He is hemorrhaging from the mouth and nose. The blood has run down his neck and pooled in the hollow of his throat. It looks spidery, because it's unable to clot. He also seems to be leaking blood from his nipples.

The final pages of Dr. Nikolai Ustinov's scientific journal are smeared with unclotted blood. His skin developed starlike hemorrhages in the underlayers. Incredibly—the Vector scientists had never seen this—he sweated blood directly from the pores of his skin, and left bloody fingerprints on the pages of his diary. He wept again before he died.

Ken Alibek is nearly hypnotic when he speaks of these things in his flat voice. We sat around the kitchen table as if we were old friends sharing a story. A gray light shone through the kitchen window, and I saw the red flash of a cardinal near the Patricks' bird feeder, almost a flicker of blood. The dog noticed a squirrel, and started barking. "Go get him, Billy," Patrick said, rising to let the dog out.

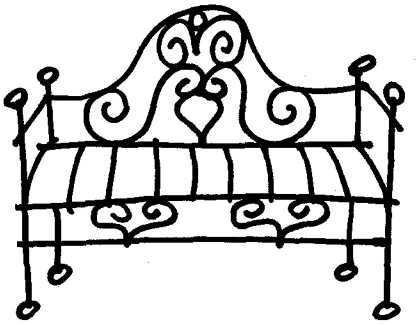
Dr. Ustinov died on April 30, 1988. An autopsy was performed in the spacesuit morgue of the biocontainment hospital. If this was indeed the Popp strain of Marburg virus—and who could say?—it was incredibly lethal. It produced effects in the human body that were stunning, terrifying. Alibek says that a pathology team removed Ustinov's liver and his spleen. They sucked a quantity of his destroyed blood out of a leg vein using large syringes.

They froze the blood and the body parts. They kept the Ustinov strain alive and continually replicating in the laboratories at Vector. They named the strain Variant U, after Ustinov, and they learned how to mass-produce it in simple bioreactors, flasks used for growing viruses. They dried Variant U, and processed it into an inhalable dust. The particles of Variant U were coated to protect them in the air so that they would drift for many miles.

In late 1990, Biopreparat researchers tested airborne Variant U on monkeys and other small animals in special explosion-test chambers at the Stepnagorsk plant. Marburg Variant U proved to be extremely potent in airborne form. They found that just one to five microscopic particles of Variant U lodged in the lungs of a monkey were almost guaranteed to make the animal crash, bleed, and die. With normal weapons-grade anthrax, in comparison, it takes about eight thousand spores lodged in the lungs to pretty much guarantee infection and death.

Alibek said that by the fall of 1991, just before Boris Yeltsin came to power, Marburg Variant U was on the verge of becoming a strategic/operational biological weapon, ready to be manufactured in large quantities and loaded into warheads on MIRVs. These warheads are sinister things. Ten separate cone-shaped warheads, each targeted on a different location, sit atop a missile. Special cooling systems inside each warhead keep the virus alive during the heat of reëntry through the earth's atmosphere. "If we can land a cosmonaut to earth alive, we can do the same with a virus," Alibek explained. "We use parachutes." The biowarheads are parachuted over a city, and at a certain altitude they break apart. Out of each warhead bursts a spray of more than a hundred oval bomblets the size of small cantaloupes. The cantaloupes fly out a distance and then split in overlapping patterns, releasing a haze of bioparticles that quickly becomes invisible.

Variant U never became part of the Soviets' strategic arsenal, which was stocked with Black Death, Alibekov anthrax, and powdered smallpox. (Never less than twenty tons of weapons-grade dry smallpox was stockpiled in bunkers.) But it seems quite possible that when the Russian biowarfare facilities fell on hard times and biologists began leaving Russia to work in other countries, some of them carried freeze-dried Variant U with them, ready for further experimentation. Variant U started, perhaps, with a monkey worker named Popp, but its end in the human species is yet to be seen.



A GENERATION ago, biological weapons were called germ-warfare weapons. Biological weapons are very different from chemical weapons. A chemical weapon is a poison that kills upon contact with the skin. Bioweapons are microorganisms, bacteria or viruses, that invade the body, multiply inside it, and destroy it. Bioweapons can be used as strategic weapons. That is, they are incredibly powerful and dangerous. They can kill huge numbers of people if they are used properly, and their effects are not limited to one place or a small target. Chemical weapons, on the other hand, can be used only tactically. It is virtually impossible to put enough of a chemical in the air in a high enough concentration to wipe out a large number of people over a large territory. And chemicals aren't alive and can't spread through an infectious process.

There are two basic types of biological weapons, those that are contagious and those that are not. Anthrax is not contagious: people don't spread it among themselves; you can't catch anthrax from someone who is dying of it. Smallpox is contagious. It spreads rapidly, magnifying itself, causing mortality and chaos on a large scale.

Like any weapon, a biological weapon can be released accidentally, but when a biological accident happens, the consequences can be particularly insidious. I talked about this with Ken Alibek that day in Bill Patrick's kitchen, while we drank whiskey in the soft light of a winter afternoon. Alibek spoke about how bioweapons have a disturbing tendency to invade nonhuman populations of living creatures—thus finding a new niche in the ecosystems of the earth, apart from the human species. When he was the acting director of the biowarfare facility at Omutninsk, his safety officers discovered that wild rodents living in the woods outside the factory had become chronically infected with the Schu-4 military strain of tularemia—a bacterium that causes a type of pneumonia—which was being made in the plant. It was a hot, lethal strain that came from the United States: an American biological weapon that the Soviets had managed to obtain during the nineteen-fifties. Now, unexpectedly, the wild rodents were spreading Schu-4 among themselves in the forests around Omutninsk. The rodents were not the natural host of tularemia, but it had apparently established itself in them as new hosts. People catch tularemia easily from rodents, and it can be fatal. Alibek mounted an investigation and found that a pipe running through a basement area had a small leak and was dripping a suspension of tularemia cells into the ground. The rodents may have come in contact with the contaminated soil in that one spot.

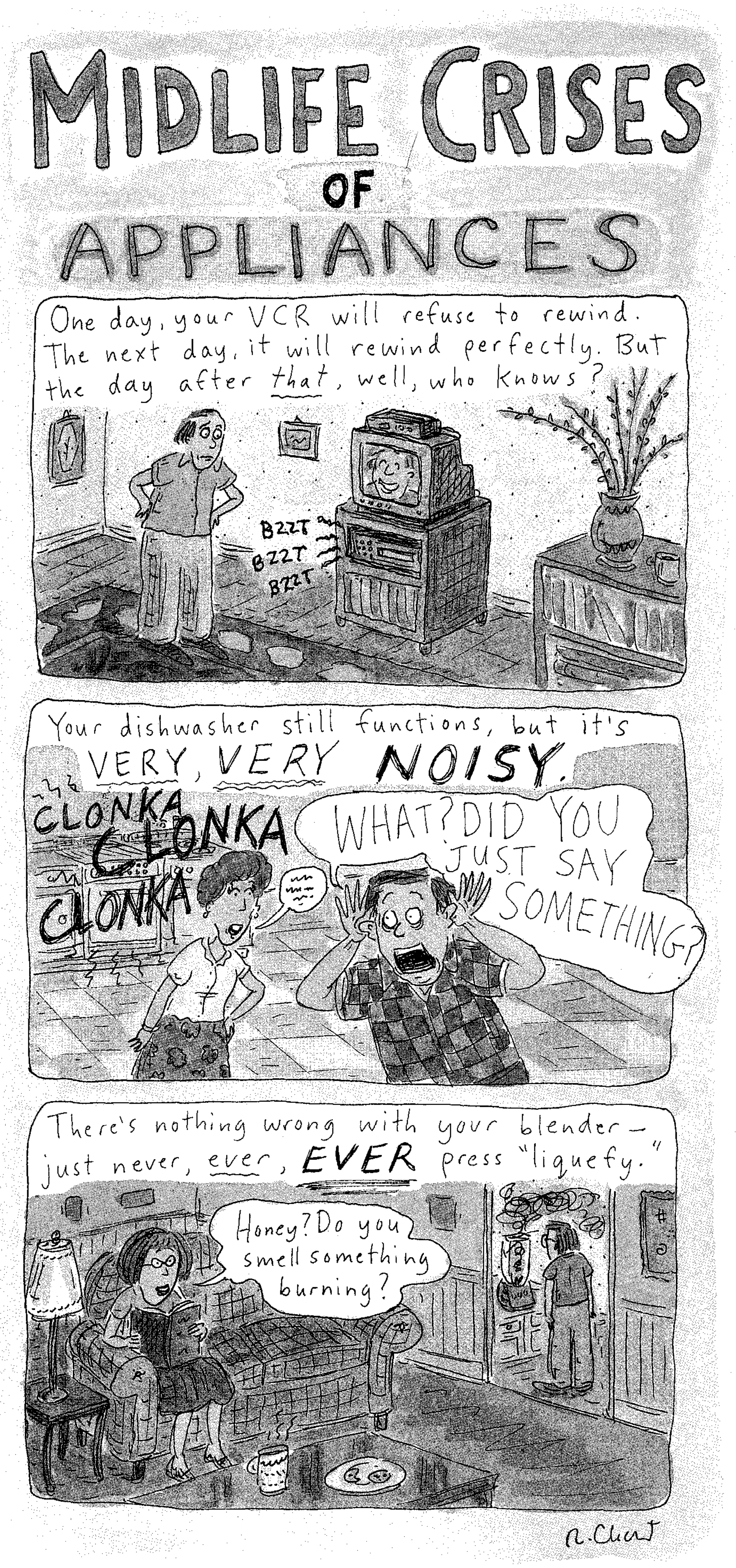
The staff tried to sterilize the forest of rodents near the plant. That didn't work, because rodents are impossible to eradicate. "We could not get rid of the rodents. We tried everything," Alibek said. "Nobody knows today, but we can assume that the tularemia is still there in the rodents." Nobody knows if anyone has died of the American-Russian tularemia around the Kirov region.

"Could it have spread across Russia in rodents?" I asked.

"This I don't know."

BIOPREPARAT, or The System, was set up in 1973, just a year after the Soviet Union signed the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, an agreement banning the development, use, and stockpiling of biological weapons. The United States, which had ended its offensive-bioweapons program in 1969, also signed the treaty, as did Great Britain. (Some hundred and forty nations have signed the convention by now.) The Soviets continued to believe, however, that the United States had not ended its bioweapons program but simply hidden it away, turning it into a "black" weapons program. "The notion that the Americans had given up their biological weapons was thought of as the great American lie," a British intelligence officer recalls. "In fact, most of the Biopreparat scientists had never even heard of the Biological Weapons Convention."

Biopreparat consisted of some forty research-and-production facilities. About a dozen of them were enormous. Perhaps half of the employees developed weapons and the other half made medicines. Biopreparat worked both sides of the street: it cured diseases and invented new ones. An island in the Aral Sea, curiously named Rebirth Island, was used for open-air weapons testing. Large numbers of animals, and perhaps some humans, died there. Biopreparat was modelled to


MIDLIFE CRISES OF APPLIANCES
One day, your VCR will refuse to rewind. The next day, it will rewind perfectly. But the day after that, well, who knows?
BZZT BZZT BZZT
Your dishwasher still functions, but it's VERY, VERY NOISY.
CLONKA CLONKA CLONKA
WHAT? DID YOU JUST SAY SOMETHING?
There's nothing wrong with your blender—just never, ever, EVER press "liquefy."
Honey? Do you smell something burning?
R. Chast

some extent on the Manhattan Project, the program that led to the first atomic bomb. Military people administered the program and scientists did the research-and-development work.

Somehow, Biopreparat's weapons program remained invisible to the American scientific community. There was a commonly held belief among many American scientists, supported by the strong, even passionate views of a handful of experts in biological weapons, that the Soviet Union was not violating the treaty. This view persisted, despite reports to the contrary from intelligence agencies, which were often viewed as being driven by right-wing ideology.

One of the side effects of the closing of the American bioweapons program was that the United States lost its technical understanding of biological weapons. There has long been a general feeling among American scientists—it's hard to say just how widespread it is, but it is definitely there—that biological weapons don't work. They are said to be uncontrollable, liable to infect their users, or unworkable in any practical sense. A generation ago, leading physicists in this country understood nuclear weapons because they had built them, and they had observed their effects in field tests and in war. The current generation of American molecular biologists has been spared the agony of having created weapons of mass destruction, but, since these biologists haven't built them, or tested them, they don't know much about their real performance characteristics.

Sitting in Bill Patrick's kitchen, I said to Alibek, "There seems to be a common belief among American scientists that biological weapons aren't effective as weapons. You see these views quoted occasionally in newspapers and magazines."

Alibek looked disturbed, then annoyed. "You test them to find out. You learn how to make them work," he said to me. "I had a meeting yesterday at a defense agency. They knew absolutely nothing about biological weapons. They want to develop protection against them, but all their expertise is in nuclear weapons. I can say I don't believe that nuclear weapons work. Nuclear weapons destroy everything. Biological weapons are more . . . beneficial. They don't destroy buildings, they only destroy vital activity."

"Vital activity?"

"People," he said.

THE first defector to emerge from Biopreparat was Vladimir Pasechnik, a microbiologist, who arrived in Great Britain in 1989, just as the Soviet Union was beginning to crumble. (He was No. 1 to Alibek's No. 2.) Pasechnik frightened British intelligence, and later the C.I.A., when he told them that his work as director of the Institute of Ultrapure Biopreparations, in Leningrad, had involved offensive-biowarfare research into *Yersinia pestis*, a pestilential microbe that causes plague, or Black Death—an airborne contagious bacterial organism that wiped out a third of the population of Europe around the year 1348. Natural plague is curable with antibiotics. After listening to Dr. Pasechnik, the British concluded that the Soviet Union had developed a genetically engineered strain of plague that was resistant to antibiotics. Because the Black Death can travel through the air in a cough from person to person, a strain of multi-drug-resistant Black Death might be able to amplify itself through a human population in ever-widening chains of infection, culminating in a biological crown fire in the human species. No nuclear weapon could do that. What was the Soviet Union doing developing strategic contagious biological weapons? "I couldn't sleep at night, thinking about what we were doing," Pasechnik told his British handlers. Even though Western intelligence agencies had known that the Russians had a bioweapons program, they had not known what was being developed, and that the United States was a so-called deep target, far enough away so that the Soviet Union wouldn't be contaminated.

President George Bush and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were briefed on Pasechnik's revelations, and they put direct personal pressure on Mikhail Gorbachev to open up the biowarfare facilities in the U.S.S.R. to a team of outside inspectors. Eventually, he agreed, and a joint British-American weapons-inspection team toured four of the main Biopreparat facilities in January, 1991. The inspectors visited Vector (the virology complex outside Novosibirsk, where Ustinov died) and a giant, high-security facility south of Moscow called the State Research Center for Applied Microbiology at Obolensk, where they found fermenter tanks—forty of them, each two stories tall. They were maintained at Biosafety Level 4, inside huge ring-shaped biocontainment

"My lord, Sir Arthur is pleased to bid thee welcome to his food court."

zones, in a building called Corpus One. The facility was dedicated to research on a variety of bacterial microbes, especially *Yersinia pestis*. The Level 4 production tanks were obviously intended for making enormous quantities of something deadly, but when the inspectors arrived the tanks were sparkling clean and sterile.

As the British and American weapons inspectors toured the Biopreparat facilities, they ran into the same problems that recently faced the United Nations Special Commission inspectors in Iraq. They were met with denials, evasions, and large rooms that had been stripped of equipment and cleaned up. A British inspector said to me, "This was clearly the most successful biological-weapons program on earth. These people just sat there and lied to us, and lied, and lied."

The deal was that after the Americans and the British had peeked at Biopreparat a team of Soviet inspectors was to visit the United States. In December, 1991, Ken Alibek and a number of leading Biopreparat scientists and military people visited USAMRIID, at Fort Detrick, the Army's Dugway Proving Ground, in Utah, and the Army's old bioweapons-production facility in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, which had been abandoned and partly dismantled in 1969. The Russians stumbled around the weeds in Pine Bluff and saw rusting railroad tracks, buildings with their roofs falling in, and nothing that worked. Alibek was pretty well convinced by the time he got home that the United States did not have a bioweapons program. But when the final report was issued by the inspectors to the government of Boris Yeltsin it stated that they had found plenty of evidence for a program. Alibek refused to participate in the writing of that report, and he decided to quit Biopreparat.

"It was a confused situation," he said. "It was at the exact time when the Soviet Union collapsed. I told all these people I didn't agree with their politics." For a few months, he hung on in Moscow, supporting his family by trading—"It was easy to make money in those days, you could trade anything"—but he found that his telephone was tapped, and that the K.G.B. had set up a so-called gray unit to watch him, a surveillance team stationed near his apartment. He decided to move his family to Alma-Ata, in Kazakhstan. What happened next Alibek refuses to talk about. He will not tell me how he got his family to the United States. Once here, he dropped completely out of sight. It is pretty obvious that he was holed up with American intelligence people, discussing his scientific and technical knowledge with them. Several years went by, and Dr. Alibekov morphed into Ken Alibek.

"Oh, look. Tonight, the role of Dr. Lessac, normally played by some guy I never heard of, is being played by some other guy I never heard of."

• •

THE most powerful bioweapons are dry powders formed of tiny particles that are designed to lodge in the human lung. The particles are amber or pink. They have a strong tendency to fly apart from one another, so that if you throw them in the air they disperse like a crowd leaving Yankee Stadium. As they disperse, they become invisible to the human eye, normally within five seconds after the release. You can't see a bioweapon, you can't smell it, you can't taste it, and you don't know it was there until days later, when you start to cough and bleed, and by that time you may be spreading it around. Bill Patrick holds five patents on special processes for making biodusts that will disperse rapidly in the air and form an invisible sea of particles. His patents are classified. The U.S. government does not want anyone to obtain Patrick's research.

The particles of a bioweapon are exceedingly small, about one to five microns in diameter. You could imagine the size this way: around fifty to a hundred bioparticles lined up in a row would span the thickness of a human hair. The particles are light and fluffy, and don't fall to earth. You can imagine motes of dust dancing in a shaft of sunlight. Dust motes are mostly bits of hair and fuzz. They are much larger than weaponized bioparticles. If a dust mote were as thick as a log, then a weaponized bioparticle would resemble a child's marble. The tiny size of a weaponized bioparticle allows it to be sucked into the deepest sacs of the lung, where it sticks to the membrane, and enters the bloodstream, and begins to replicate. A bioweapon can kill you with just one particle in the lung. If the weapon is contagious in human-to-human transmission, you will kill a lot of other people, too. So much death emergent from one particle. Given the right weather conditions, a bioweapon will drift in the air for up to a hundred miles.

Sunlight kills a bioweapon. That is, a bioweapon biodegrades in sunlight. It has a "half-life," like nuclear radiation. This is known as the decay time of the bioweapon. Anthrax has a long decay time—it has a tough spore. Tularemia has a decay time of only a few minutes in sunlight. Therefore, tularemia should always be released at night.

For many years during the nineteen-fifties and sixties, Bill Patrick had his doubts that bioweapons work. Those doubts were removed decisively during the summer of 1968, when one of the biggest of a long series of open-air biological tests was conducted over the Pacific Ocean downwind of Johnston Atoll, a thousand miles southwest of Hawaii. There, in reaches of open sea, American strategic tests of bioweapons had been conducted secretly for four years. Until very recently, these tests remained unknown to people without security clearances.

"We tested certain real agents, and some of them were lethal," Patrick said. The American strategic tests of bioweapons were as expensive and elaborate as the tests of the first hydrogen bombs at Eniwetok Atoll. They involved enough ships to have made the world's fifth-largest independent navy. The ships were positioned around Johnston Atoll, upwind from a number of barges loaded with hundreds of rhesus monkeys.

Late one afternoon, Bill Patrick went out to Johnston Atoll and stood on the beach to watch a test. At sunset, just as the sun touched the horizon, a Marine Phantom jet flew in low, heading on a straight line parallel to the beach, and then continued over the horizon. Meanwhile, a single pod under its wings released a weaponized powder. The powder trailed into the air like a whiff of smoke and disappeared completely. This was visual evidence that the particles were flying away from one another. Patrick's patents worked.

The scientists call this a line-source laydown. The jet was disseminating a small amount of biopowder for every mile of flight (the exact amount is still classified). One can imagine a jet doing a line-source laydown over Los Angeles, flying from the San Fernando Valley to Long Beach, releasing dust from a single pod under the wing. It would take a few minutes. The jet would appear on radar, but the trail of bioweapon would be invisible. In Iraq, United Nations inspectors found a videotape of an Iraqi Phantom jet doing a line-source laydown over the desert. The technique looked precisely like the American laydowns, even to the Iraqis' use of a Phantom jet. The one difference was that the Iraqi Phantom had no pilot: it was a remote-controlled drone.

At Johnston Atoll, the line of particles moved with the wind over the sea, somewhat like a windshield wiper sweeping over glass. Stationed in the path of the particles, at intervals extending many miles away, were the barges full of monkeys, manned by nervous Navy crews wearing biohazard spacesuits. The line of bioparticles passed over the barges one by one. Then the monkeys were taken back to Johnston Atoll, and over the next few days half of them died. Half of the monkeys survived, and were fine. Patrick could see, clearly enough, that a jet that did a laydown of a modest amount of military bioweapon over Los Angeles could kill half the city. It would probably be more efficient at causing human deaths than a ten-megaton hydrogen bomb.

"What was the agent you used?" I asked Patrick.

"I don't want to tell you. It may still be classified. The real reason is that a lot of countries would like to know what we used, and not just the Iraqis. When we saw those test results, we knew beyond a doubt that biological weapons are strategic weapons. We were surprised. Even we didn't think they would work that well."

"But the agent you used was curable with antibiotics, right?" I said.

"Sure."

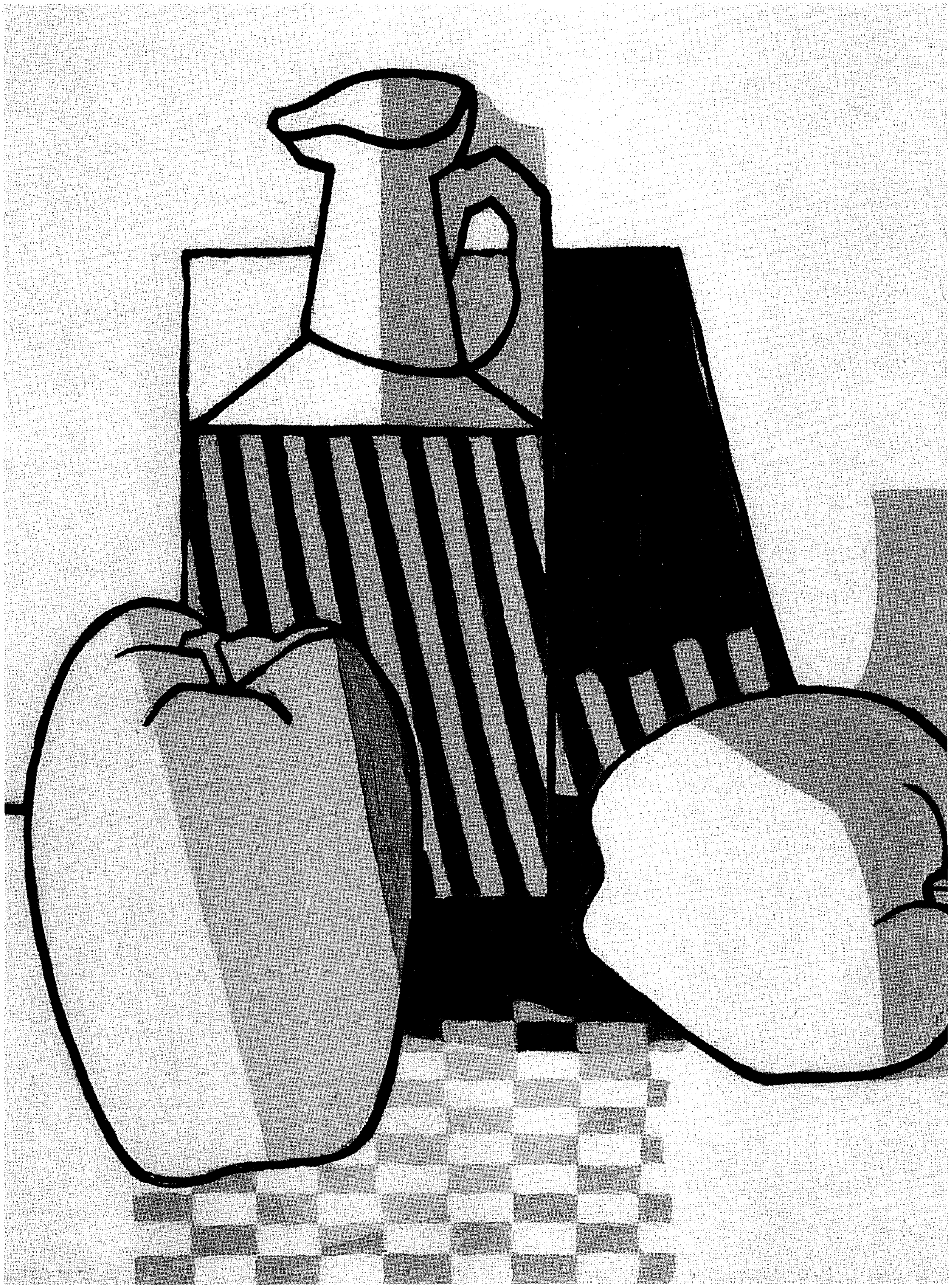
"So people could be cured—"

"Well, think about it. Let's say you hit the city of Frederick, right here. That's a small city, with a population of about fifty thousand. You could cause thirty thousand infections. To treat the infections, you'd need—let me see." He calculated quickly: "Eighty-four grams of antibiotic per person . . . that's . . . oh, my heavens, you'd need more than two tons of antibiotic, delivered overnight! There isn't that much antibiotic stored anywhere in the United States. Now think about New York City. It doesn't take a mathematician to see that if you hit New York with a biological weapon you are gonna tie things up for a while."

TODAY, Biopreparat is a much smaller organization than it was during the Soviet years, and it is ostensibly dedicated entirely to peaceful research and production. You can buy face cream and vodka made by Biopreparat. Vector, where Variant U was developed, is no longer part of Biopreparat. The Vector laboratories are undergoing an extremely painful and perhaps incomplete conversion to peaceful use, and the Vector scientists are secretive about some of their work. Dr. Frank Malinoski, who was a member of the British-American team that inspected Vector in the early nineteen-nineties, told me that it is now generally believed that the weapons program has been taken over by the Russian Ministry of Defense. "If Biopreparat was once an egg, then the

AMERICAN CUBIST

Stuart Davis (1892-1964) is one of America's most compelling modernist painters from the period before the Second World War. Not unlike his French contemporary Fernand Léger, Davis championed the triumph of the common man in a Machine Age still open to romanticization. And while he remained committed to leftist political causes his entire life, he scorned the clunky social realism of his W.P.A. colleagues. In fact, although he is best known for the vividly colored and densely packed compositions of his later years, many of his finest paintings are from the twenties and early thirties. The spare and arresting "Apples and Jug," at right, is from 1923, and is included in the Davis retrospective opening this spring at the National Museum of American Art, in Washington. A catalogue of the exhibition will be published by Little, Brown.



© ESTATE STUART DAVIS/VAGA, NYC/COURTESY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON weapons program was the yolk of the egg," he said. "They've hard-boiled the egg, and taken out the yolk and hidden it."

If, in fact, the yolk exists, what can Western governments do about it? After years of avoiding confrontation with the Russians over bioweapons, American officials are still uncertain how to proceed. Twenty million dollars or so—no one seems sure of the amount—has been budgeted by a hodgepodge of agencies to offer financial support to Russian biologists for peaceful research (so they won't go abroad). The National Academy of Sciences, for example, spent a million and a half dollars on research funding for the Russians this past year. But the agencies are in a quandary, and fear the scandal that would ensue if it turned out that their funds had been diverted for weapons research.

The yolk of the bioweapons program may now be hidden away in military facilities run by the Russian Ministry of Defense, which are off limits to Americans. The largest of these is a complex near Sergiyev Posad, an old town about thirty miles northeast of Moscow. It's not clear how much real control Boris Yeltsin has over the Russian military. If the Ministry of Defense wanted to have a bioweapons program, could anyone tell it to stop? One prominent American scientist said to me, "All of our efforts in touchy-feely relationships have certainly engaged the former Biopreparat people, but we've been turned down flat by the military people. No doubt they're hiding something at Sergiyev Posad, but what are they hiding? Is it a weapons program? Or is it a shadow that doesn't mean anything, like the shadow on the shade in 'Home Alone'? We just don't know."

Meanwhile, there is strong suspicion that at some of the more visible laboratories weapons-related genetic engineering is being conducted. Genetic engineering, in military terms, is the creation of genetically altered viruses and bacteria in order to enhance their power as weapons. This work can be done by altering an organism's DNA, which is the ribbonlike molecule that contains the organism's genetic code and is found in every cell and in every virus particle. Three months ago, researchers at the Center for Applied Microbiology at Obolensk—the place south of Moscow where Biopreparat once developed and mass-produced hot strains of Black Death for Soviet missiles and weapons systems—published a paper in the British medical journal *Vaccine* describing how they'd created a genetically engineered anthrax. The Obolensk anthrax, they reported, was resistant to the standard anthrax vaccine.

Ken Alibek thinks that the Russians published information about their research because "they are trying to get some kind of 'legalization' of military genetic engineering," and because they are proud of their work. The Biological Weapons Convention is vague on exactly what constitutes research into an offensive weapon. Alibek said that the Russian biologists are trying to push the envelope of what is permissible. Then, "if someone other than Boris Yeltsin was in power, they could re-create their entire biological-weapons program quickly."

Western biowarfare experts don't know if the new engineered anthrax is as deadly as normal anthrax, but it may be, and it could fall into the wrong hands, such as Iraq or Iran. The real problem may lie in those countries. Genetic-engineering work can be done in a small building by a few Ph.D. researchers, using tabletop machines that are available anywhere in the world at no great cost. In high schools in the United States today, students are taught how to do genetic engineering. They learn how to create new variants of (safe) bacteria which are resistant to antibiotics. One genetic-engineering kit for high-school students costs forty-two dollars and is sold through the mail.

A virus that seems particularly amenable to engineering is smallpox. According to Alibek and others, it is possible that smallpox has left Russia for parts unknown, travelling in the pockets of mercenary biologists. "Iran, Iraq, probably Libya, probably Syria, and North Korea could have smallpox," Alibek said. He bases his list partly on what Russian intelligence told him while he was in the program, for the Russians were very sensitive to other countries' bioweapons programs, and watched carefully. Bioweapons programs may exist in Israel (which has never signed the bioweapons treaty) and Pakistan. Alibek is convinced that India has a program. He says that when he was in Biopreparat, Russian intelligence showed him evidence that China has a large bioweapons program.

The deadliest natural smallpox virus is known as *Variola major*. Natural smallpox

SERVICE STATION

I'm just repeating the sentences
of those who've spoken before me—public servants, middle
managers, white-collar workers, ordinary mortals.
They all say more or less the same:
my car is sputtering, juddering wildly,
will not speed up when I put my foot down.
Blindly I grope for words
as though they were a tool. If something is missing,
I am all eyes. I can't help
my language—it's there and has got to be
used or else it will soon be rusty.
I say to my wife: The food tastes fine.
Or else: I love you. Sometimes I fling
myself into the arms of words, but that's
bad for business. Take yesterday:
A poet was here, a real old-timer—
pure gibberish. His spark plugs
were clogged up with soot, that's all that was wrong,
but he couldn't describe it, too sad.
It is a mistake to believe, he said,
but by then I was under the hood.

—Michael Krüger

(*Translated, from the German, by Richard Dove.*)

was eradicated from the earth in 1977, when the last human case of it appeared, in Somalia. Since then, the virus has lived only in laboratories. Smallpox is an extremely lethal virus, and it is highly contagious in the air. When a child with chicken pox appears in a school classroom, many or most of the children in the class may go on to catch chicken pox. Smallpox is as contagious as chicken pox. One case of smallpox can give rise to twenty new cases. Each of those cases can start twenty more. In 1970, when a man infected with smallpox appeared in an emergency room in Germany, seventeen cases of smallpox appeared in the hospital on the floors above. Ultimately, the German government vaccinated a hundred thousand people to stop the outbreak. Two years later in Yugoslavia, a man with a severe case of smallpox visited several hospitals before dying in an intensive-care unit. To stop the resulting outbreak, which forced twenty thousand people into isolation, Yugoslav health authorities had to vaccinate virtually the entire population of the country within three weeks. Smallpox can start the biological equivalent of a runaway chain reaction. About a third of the people who get a hot strain of smallpox die of it. The skin puffs up with blisters the size of hazelnuts, especially over the face. A severe case of smallpox can essentially burn the skin off one's body.

The smallpox vaccine wears off after ten to twenty years. None of us are immune any longer, unless we've had a recent shot. There are currently seven million usable doses of smallpox vaccine stored in the United States, in one location in Pennsylvania. If an outbreak occurred here, it might be necessary to vaccinate all two hundred and seventy million people in the United States in a matter of weeks. There would be no way to meet such a demand.

"Russia has researched the genetic alteration of smallpox," Alibek told me. "In 1990 and 1991, we engineered a smallpox at Vector. It was found that several areas of the smallpox genome"—the DNA—"can be used for the introduction of some foreign genetic material. The first development was smallpox and VEE." VEE, or Venezuelan equine encephalitis, is a brain virus. It causes a severe headache and near-coma, but it is generally not lethal. Alibek said that the researchers spliced VEE into smallpox. The result was a recombinant chimera virus. In ancient Greek myth, the chimera was a monster made from parts of different animals. Recombination means the mixing of genes from different organisms. "It is called smallpox-VEE chimera," Alibek said. It could also be called Veepox. Under a microscope, Alibek said, the Veepox looks like smallpox, but it isn't.

According to Alibek, there was one major technical hurdle to clear in the creation of a workable Veepox chimera, and he says that it took the Vector researchers years to solve the problem. They solved it by finding more than one place in the smallpox DNA where you could insert new genes without decreasing smallpox's ability to cause disease. Many researchers feel that the smallpox virus doesn't cause disease in animals in any way that is useful for understanding its effects on humans. Alibek says that the Russians tested Veepox in monkeys, but he says that he doesn't know the results.

More recently, Alibek claims, the Vector researchers may have created a recombinant Ebola-smallpox chimera. One could call it Ebolapox. Ebola virus uses the molecule RNA for its genetic code, whereas smallpox uses DNA. Alibek believes that the Russian researchers made a DNA copy of the disease-causing parts of Ebola, then grafted them into smallpox. Alibek said he thinks that the Ebolapox virus is stable—that is, that it will replicate successfully in a test tube or in animals—which means that, once created, Ebolapox will live forever in a laboratory, and will not uncreate itself. Thus a new form of life may have been brought into the world.

"The Ebolapox could produce the form of smallpox called blackpox," Alibek says. Blackpox, sometimes known as hemorrhagic smallpox, is the most severe type of smallpox disease. In a blackpox infection, the skin does not develop blisters. Instead, the skin becomes dark all over. Blood vessels leak, resulting in severe internal hemorrhaging. Blackpox is invariably fatal. "As a weapon, the Ebolapox would give the hemorrhages and high mortality rate of Ebola virus, which would give you a blackpox, plus the very high contagiousness of smallpox," Alibek said.

Bill Patrick became exasperated. "Ken! Ken! I think you've got overkill here. What is the point of creating an Ebola smallpox? I mean, it would be nice to do this from a scientific point of view, sure. But with old-fashioned natural smallpox

"I hate to say it, but Gore appears to be a regular sort of chap, after all."

you can bring a society to its knees. You don't need any Ebolapox, Ken. Why, you're just gonna kill everybody."

"I suspect that this research has been done," Alibek said calmly.

Lev Sandakhchiev, the head of Vector, strongly denies this. "In our center we developed vaccinia-virus recombinants with VEE viruses and some others," he says. Vaccinia is a harmless virus related to smallpox. It is used for making vaccines.

"How much do you think it would cost to create genetically engineered smallpox?" I asked Alibek.

"This is not expensive." He paused, thinking. "A few million dollars. This is what it cost us for making the smallpox-VEE chimera at Vector in 1990 and 1991."

Ken Alibek's statements about the genetic engineering of smallpox are disturbing. I felt a need to hear some perspective from senior scientists who are close to the situation. Dr. Peter Jahrling is the chief scientist at USAMRIID, and he has visited Russia four times in recent months. ("It seems as if all I do these days is visit Russia," he said to me.) He knows the scientists at Vector pretty well. He has listened to Alibek and questioned him carefully, and he doesn't believe him about the Ebola-smallpox chimera. "His talk about chimeras of Ebola is sheer fantasy, in my opinion," Jahrling said. "This would be technically formidable. We have seen zero evidence of the Vector scientists doing that. But a smallpox chimera—is it plausible? Yes, it is, and I think that's scary. The truth is, I'm not so worried about governments anymore. I think genetic engineering has been reduced to simple enough principles so that any reasonably equipped group of reasonably good scientists would be able to construct a credible threat using genetic engineering. I don't think anyone could knock out New York City with a genetically engineered bug, but someone might be able to knock out a few people and thereby make an incredible panic."

Joshua Lederberg is a member of a working group of scientists at the National Academy of Sciences who advise the government on biological weapons and the potential for bioterrorism. He is a professor at Rockefeller University, in Manhattan, and is considered to be one of the founders of the biotechnology revolution. He received the Nobel Prize for discovering—in 1946, when he was a young man—that bacteria can swap genes with each other. It was apparent to him even back then that people would soon be moving genes around, for evil as well as for good.

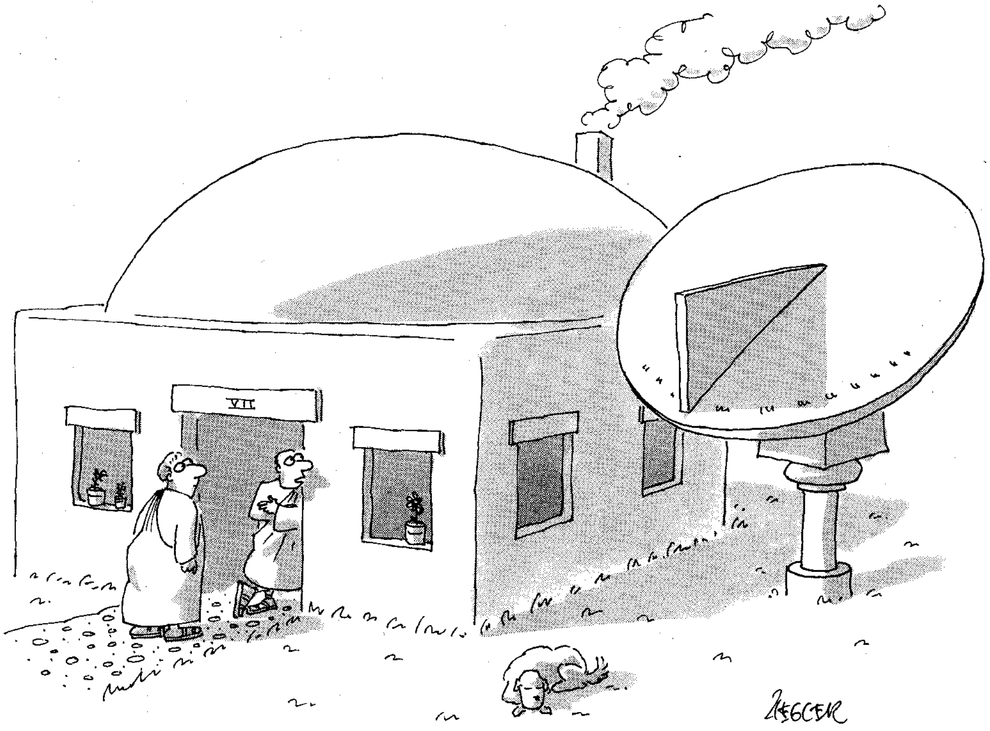
I found Lederberg in his office, in a modest building covered with vines, in a green island of grass and trees on Manhattan's East Side. He is in his seventies, a man of modest size and modest girth, with a trim white beard, glasses, intelligent hazel eyes, and careful sentences. Lederberg knows Alibek and Pasechnik. He said to me, "They are offering very important evidence. You have to look carefully at what they're saying, but I offer high credibility to their remarks in general." He seemed to be choosing his words. As far as what was going on at Vector, he says that "with smallpox, anything could have happened. Lev Sandakhchiev is one of the world's authorities on the smallpox genome. But there are all kinds of reasons you'd want to introduce modifications into smallpox." He said that you might, for example, alter smallpox in order to make a vaccine. "You have to prove intent to make a weapon," he said.

Researchers normally introduce new genes into the vaccinia virus. Vaccinia doesn't cause major illness in humans, but if you're infected with it you become immune to smallpox. When the new genes are introduced into vaccinia, they tend to make the virus even weaker, even less able to trigger disease. Putting new genes into smallpox presumably might make it weaker, too. Alibek insisted that the Russians have found places in the genome of smallpox where you can insert new genes, yet the virus remains deadly.

I said to Lederberg, "If someone is adding genes from Ebola to smallpox virus, and it's making the smallpox more deadly, as Alibek says is happening in Russia, isn't that evidence of intent to make a weapon?"

"No," he said firmly. "You can't prove intent by the experiment itself. It's not even clear to me that adding Ebola genes to smallpox would make it more deadly. What troubles me is that this kind of work is being done in a clandestine way. They are *not* telling us what is going on. To be doing such potentially evil research without telling us what they are doing is a provocation. To do an experiment of this kind in the United States would be almost impossible. There would be an extensive review, and it might well not be allowed for safety reasons. The experiment is extremely dangerous, because things could get out of hand."

Lederberg agreed that Russia does have a clandestine biological-weapons program today, though it's not at all clear how much Vector and Biopreparat have to do with it,



"Sure, it's an eyesore, but we get better time than anyone else in the neighborhood."

since they are independent entities. As for the biological missiles once aimed at the U.S., it doesn't surprise him: "You can put anything in a ballistic missile."

Lederberg seems to be a man who has looked into the face of evil for a long time and hasn't blinked. He is part of a group of scientists and government officials who are trying to maintain a dialogue with Russian biologists and bring them into the international community of science. "Our best hope is to have a dialogue with Sandakhchiev," he said quietly. "There is no technical solution to the problem of biological weapons. It needs an ethical, human, and moral solution if it's going to happen at all. Don't ask me what the odds are for an ethical solution, but there is no other solution." He paused, considering his words. "But would an ethical solution appeal to a sociopath?"

"The crab bisque, the tournedos, the bourbon soufflé . . . Thank you so much for trying."

TERRORISM is the uncontrolled part of the equation. A while ago, Richard Butler, who is the head of the United Nations Special Commission weapons-inspection teams in Iraq, remarked to me, "Everyone wonders what kinds of delivery systems Iraq may have for biological weapons, but it seems to me that the best delivery system would be a suitcase left in the Washington subway."

Could something like that happen? What would it be like? The truth is that no one really knows, because lethal bioterror on a major scale has not occurred. At one point in my talk with Ken Alibek in Bill Patrick's kitchen that winter afternoon, we took a break, and the former master bioweaponeers stood on the lawn outside the house, looking down on the city of Frederick. The view reaches to the Mt. Airy Ridge, a blue line in the distance. Clouds had covered the sun again.

Patrick was squinting east, with a professional need to understand the nuances of wind and cloud. "The wind is ten to twelve miles an hour, gusting a bit." He pointed to smoke coming from a building in the valley. "See the smoke there? It's drifting up a little, but see how it hangs? We have sort of an inversion today, not a good one. I'd say it's a good day for anthrax or Q fever."

Alibek lit a cigarette and watched the sky. He appraises weather the same way Patrick does.

Suddenly Patrick turned on his heel and went into his garage. He returned in a few moments carrying a large mayonnaise jar. He unscrewed the cap. The jar contained a fine, creamy, fluffy powder, with a mottled pink tinge. The pink was the dried blood of chicken embryos, he explained. "This is a simulant for VEE." It was a fake version of the weaponized brain virus. It was sterile, and had no living organisms in it. It was harmless.

The VEE virus can be grown in weapons-grade concentration in live chicken embryos. When the embryos are swimming with virus particles, you break open the eggs (you had better be wearing a spacesuit), and you harvest the sick embryos. You freeze-dry them and process them into a powder using one of Patrick's secret methods.

He shook the jar under my face. The blood-tinged powder climbed the sides of the jar. A tendril of simulated bioweapon reached for my nose.

Instinctively, I jerked my head back.

Patrick walked across the lawn and stood by an oak tree. Suddenly he extended his arm and heaved the contents of the jar into the air. His simulated brain-virus weapon blasted through the branches of a dogwood tree and took off in the wind, heading straight down a meadow and across the street, booming with celerity toward Frederick. Within seconds, the aerosol cloud had become invisible. But the particles were there, moving with the breeze at a steady ten to twelve miles an hour.

Alibek watched, tugging at his cigarette, nonchalant, mildly amused. "Yeah. You won't see the cloud now."

"Some of those particles'll go eighteen to twenty miles, maybe to the Mt. Airy Ridge," Patrick remarked. The simulated brain virus would arrive in Mt. Airy in less than two hours. He walked back and put his hand on Alibek's shoulder, and smiled.

Alibek nodded.

"What are you thinking?" I asked Alibek.

He pursed his lips and shrugged. "This is not exciting for me."

Patrick went on, "Say you wanted to hit Frederick today, Ken, what would you use?"

Alibek glanced at the sky, weighing the weather and his options. "I'd use anthrax mixed with smallpox." ♦

LONDON PORTFOLIO

BETWEEN THE ACTS

BY RICHARD AVEDON

THE buoyancy of any era is epitomized by its performers, not by its politicians. In Britain these days, the Labour bubble may have been pricked, but the country's newfound exuberance is still on display in the performing arts, where the roguish feminist energy of Aisling O'Sullivan, who burns up the stage in Martin McDonagh's "The Cripple of Inishmaan," coexists with the intellectual prowess of John Wood's evocation of A. E. Housman in Tom Stoppard's "The Invention of Love." London's gravitational pull may even lure Kenneth Greve, the much sought-after young star of the Royal Danish Ballet, to Britain's Royal Ballet. Meanwhile, the West End's Old Guard seems to grow stronger and more brazen in this expansive climate: Judi Dench brilliantly faces down loss in David Hare's "Amy's View," and Ian Holm as a beleaguered and hectoring King Lear captures the culture's sense of Conservative collapse.

American swagger has filtered not only into English politics but also into English playwriting. The Young Turks used to lampoon Americans as clowns of capitalism; now the new prize-winning writers, like Patrick Marber and Jez Butterworth, adopt high-energy slang and absorb the streamlined storytelling of masters like Mamet and Shepard. While Tony Blair is busy deconstructing Conservative social policy, the same elegant revision is being practiced on the stage. The choreographer Matthew Bourne, an imaginative storyteller, whose all-male "Swan Lake" will be coming to Broadway this fall, has recently put a new spin on "Cinderella" by setting her in a dysfunctional family during the blitz. And Janet McTeer's memorable full-tilt Nora in "A Doll's House" clearly touched a nerve in England's disenchanted electorate, which slammed the door on eighteen years of Tory rule as bravely and as nervously as Nora slams it on her blinkered husband. —JOHN LAHR

The new playwrights: Martin McDonagh, Patrick Marber, and Jez Butterworth.

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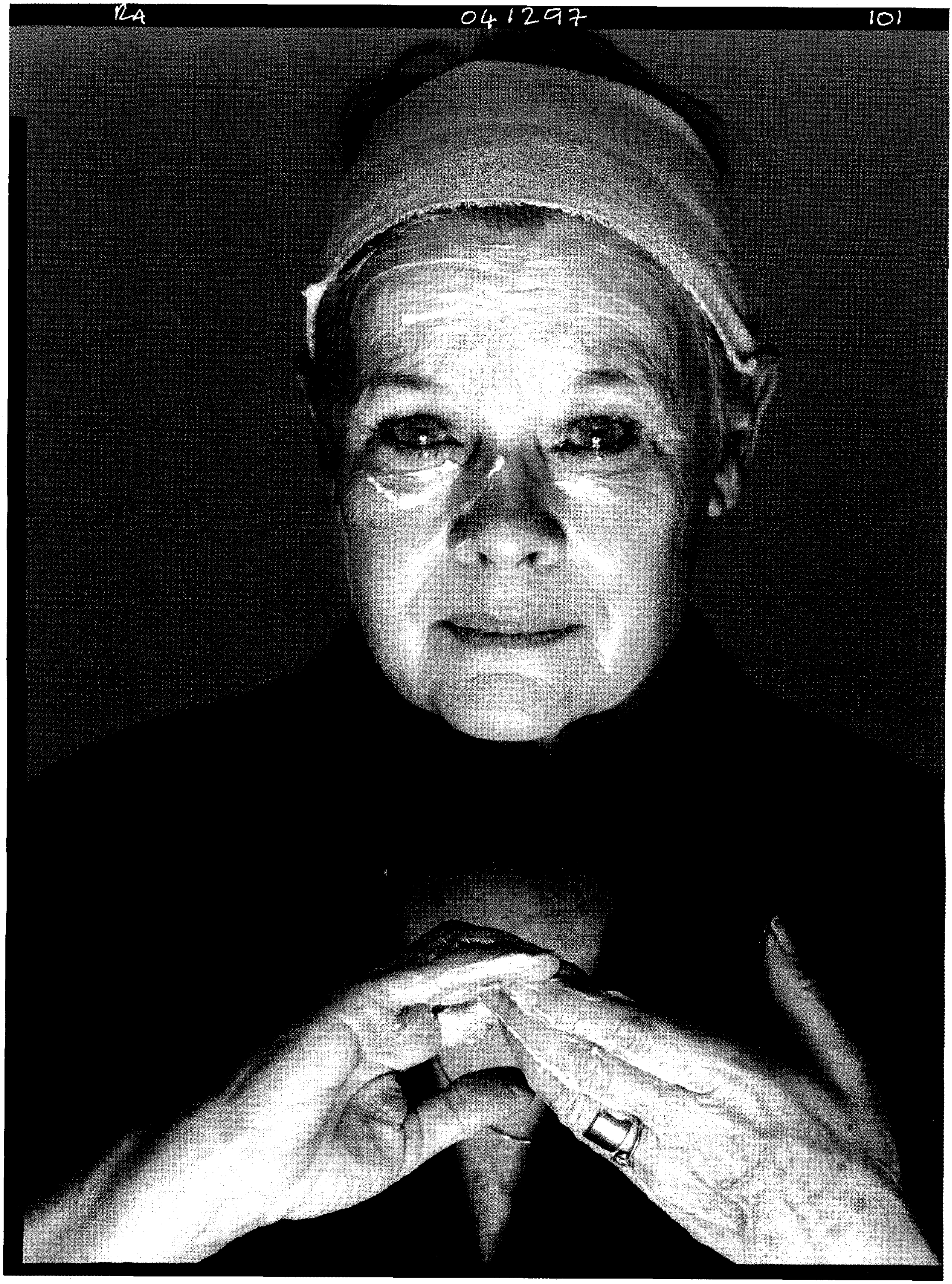
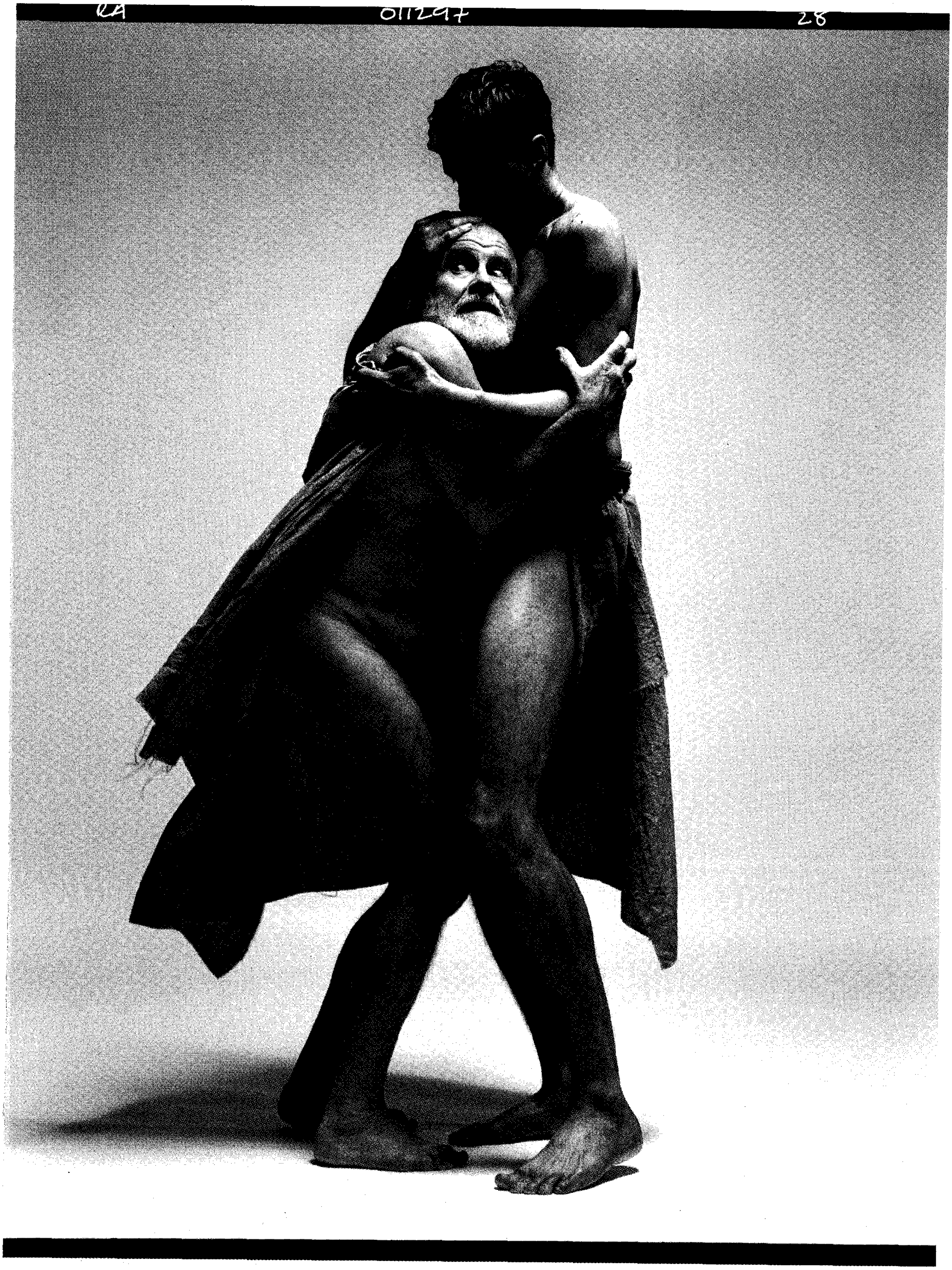
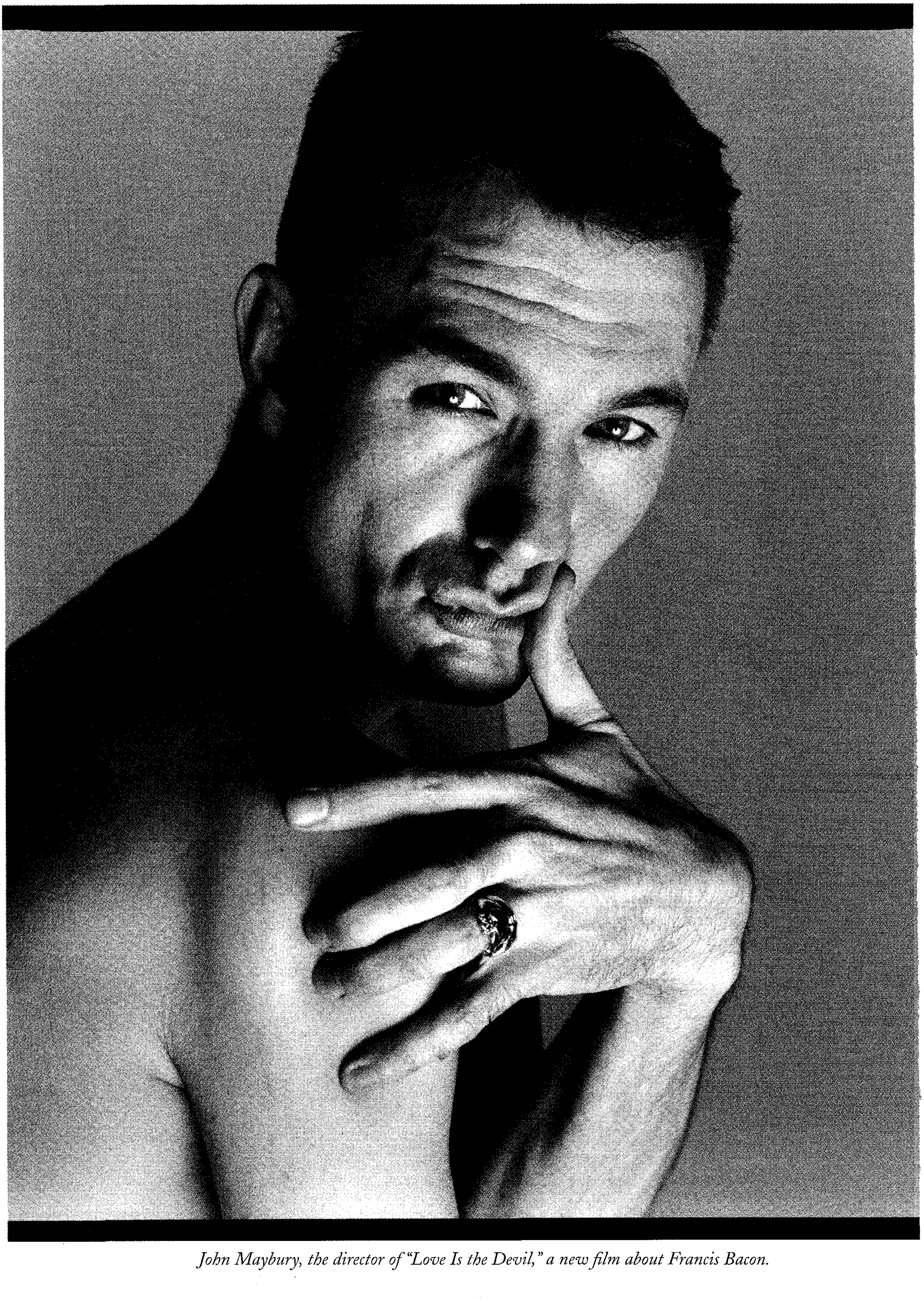


Judi Dench in "Amy's View," by David Hare.

Cate Blanchett as Queen Elizabeth in the upcoming film "Elizabeth I."



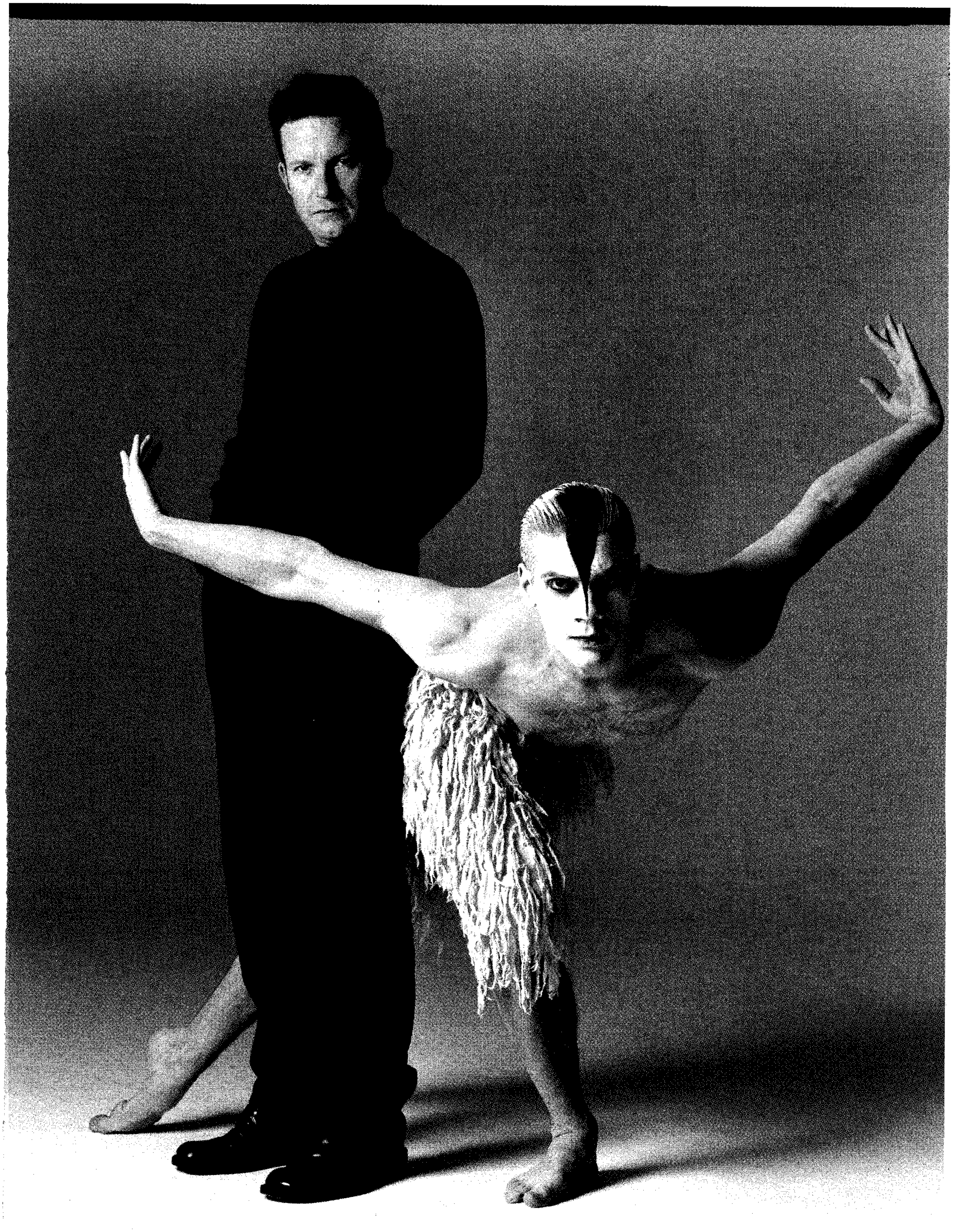
Ian Holm as Lear and Paul Rhys as Edgar in "King Lear," at the Royal National Theatre.



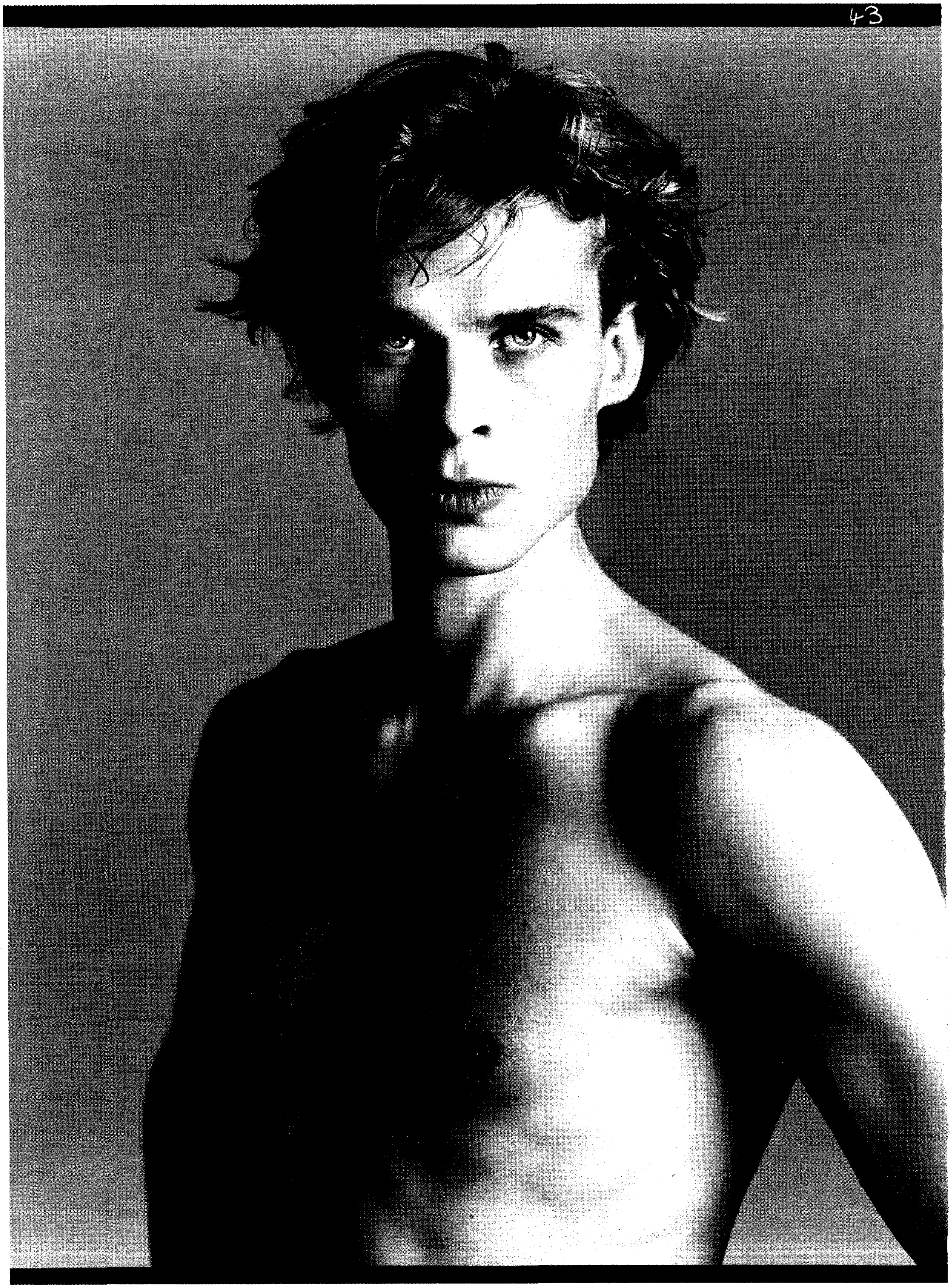
John Maybury, the director of "Love Is the Devil," a new film about Francis Bacon.

Aisling O'Sullivan in "The Cripple of Inishmaan," by Martin McDonagh.

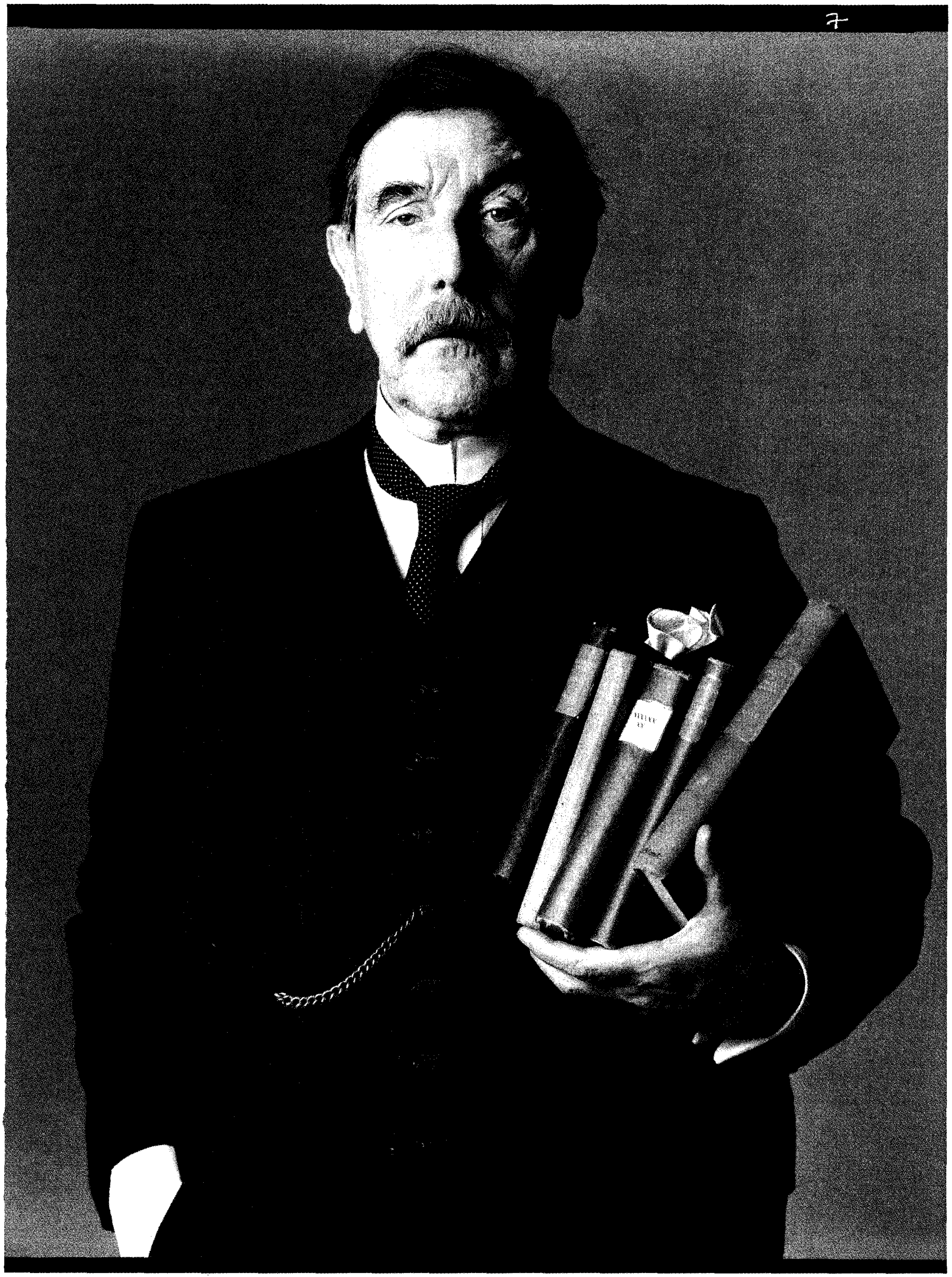
Janet McTeer, who played Nora in Ibsen's "A Doll's House" last year, is currently adapting it for the movies.



Matthew Bourne, the choreographer, and Adam Cooper, the principal dancer, of "Swan Lake."



Kenneth Greve, the star of the Royal Danish Ballet.



John Wood, who plays A. E. Housman in "The Invention of Love."

FICTION

OF THE CLOTH

At one time, there were two Churches in Ireland, equally strong.

BY WILLIAM TREVOR

HE was out of touch, and often felt it: out of touch with the times and what was happening in them, out of touch with two generations of change, with his own country and what it had become. If he travelled outside Ireland, which he had never done, he knew he would find the same new mores everywhere, the different, preferred restrictions by which people now lived their lives; but it was Ireland he thought about, the husk of the old, the seed of the new. And often he wondered what that new would be.

"The Rev. Grattan Fitzmaurice, Ennismolach Rectory," his letters were addressed, the nearest town and the county following. His three Protestant parishes, amalgamated over the years, were in a valley of pastureland in the mountains, three small churches marking them, one of them now unattended, each of them remote, as his rectory was, as his life was.

The town that was nearest was thirteen miles away, where the mountain slope became a plain and the river that flowed through the townland of Ennismolach was bridged. The rectory was reached from Doonan crossroads by taking the road to Corlough Gap and turning right three miles farther on, at the cluster of houses around Hogan's grocery and bar and the Shell petrol pump. A few minutes later there was the big Catholic Church of the Holy Assumption, solitary and splendid by the roadside, still seeming new, although it had been there for sixty years. Over the brow of the next hill were the gates to Ennismolach Rectory, its long curving avenue years ago returned to grass.

This was granite country and Grattan Fitzmaurice had a look of that gray, unyielding stone, visible even in the pastureland of the valley. Thin and tall, he belonged to this landscape, had come from it and had chosen to return to it. He had never married. Families had spread themselves in the vast rectory once upon a time; now there was only the echo of his own footsteps, the latch of the back door when Mrs. Bradshaw came in the mornings, the yawning of his retriever, the wireless when he turned it on. Emptily, all sound came twice because an echo added a pretense of more activity than there was, as if in mercy offering companionship.

There was, as well, the company of the past: the family Grattan remembered here was his own, his father the rector of Ennismolach before him, his mother wallpapering the rooms and staining the floorboards to freshen them up, his sisters. The rectory had always been home, a vigor there in his childhood, the expectation that it would continue. Change had come before his birth, and the family was still close to revolution and civil war. The once impregnable estates had fallen back to the clay, their people gone away, burnt-out houses their memorial stones. Rectories escaped because in Ireland men of the cloth would always have a place: as the infant nation was nurtured through the nineteen-thirties, it seemed in Ennismolach that ends would forever be made to meet in the lofty rooms, that there would forever be chilblains in winter, cheap cuts from the butcher at Fenit Bridge, the Saturday silence while a sermon was composed. And even as a child Grattan had wanted to follow his father's footsteps in this parish.

His father died in 1957, his mother in that year also. By then the congregation at Ennismolach church had dwindled, the chapel of ease near Fenit Bridge hadn't been made use of for years, and melancholy characterized other far-flung parishes in the county. The big houses, which had supported them, tumbled further into ruin; the families who had fled did not return; and from farm and fields, from townlands everywhere, emigration took a toll. "It'll get worse," Grattan's father said a few weeks before he died. "You realize it'll get worse?" It wasn't unexpected, he said, that the upheaval should bring further, quieter upheaval. Still, the designation of the Protestant foundation he served, the Church of Ireland, had long ago begun to seem too imposing a title, ludicrous almost in its claim. "We are a remnant," Grattan's father said.

It was an irony that they should be, for it had been Protestant leaders in the past—Wolfe Tone and Thomas Davis, Emmet and Parnell, the Henry Grattan after whom Grattan was named—who had in their different ways and in their different times been the inspiration for the Catholic Ireland that had come about, and Grattan knew that its birth was Ireland's destiny and her due. Yet it was true: they were a remnant. While Church of Ireland notice boards still stood by old church gates, gold letters on black giving details of what services would be offered, there was a withering within that Church that seemed a natural thing. Risen from near-suppression, the great Church of Rome inherited all Ireland.

In a dream when he was old, Grattan rode on horseback from Ennismolach Rectory and walked slowly to an altar between crowded pews. The dream came often, and he knew it did so because the past was never far from his thoughts. He knew, as well, that the pages could not be turned back, that when the past had been the present it

ANDERS WENNGREN

had been uneasy with shortcomings and disappointments, injustice, and distress. He did not in any way resent the fact that, while his own small churches fell into disrepair, the wayside Church of the Holy Assumption, with its Virgin's grotto and its slope of new graves, was alive and bustling, that long lines of cars were parked along the road and in gateways for its Sunday Masses, that there was Father Leahy as well as Father MacPartlan, that large sums were gathered for missions to the African heathen. Father MacPartlan and Father Leahy praised and rejoiced and celebrated, gave absolution, gave thanks. The simplicity of total belief, of belonging and of being in touch, nourished—or so it seemed to Grattan—Father MacPartlan's ruddy features and Father Leahy's untroubled smile.

A MAN called Con Tonan, who had lost the use of an arm in a tractor accident, worked in the garden of Ennismolach Rectory, his disablement rendering him unfit for employment as a farm laborer, which had always been the source of his livelihood. Unable to pay more than a pittance, Grattan had taken him on when he'd been out of work for a year. Still young, though married and with a child, Con Tonan knew nothing about gardening, but the six-mile bicycle journey to Ennismolach Rectory, and doing what he could to release the choked shrubs and restore the flower beds that had all but disappeared, gave a pattern to his day three times a week. Mrs. Bradshaw, one of Grattan's own flock, had begun to come to the rectory when Con Tonan was just beginning to understand the garden. Twice a week she drove over from Glenoe in a small, old Volkswagen, a woman who was as warmhearted as she was dutiful.

That was the household at Ennismolach, Mrs. Bradshaw ill-paid also, her arrival on Tuesdays and Thursdays as much an act of charity on her part as the employment of a one-armed man was on Grattan's. Sometimes Con Tonan brought one of his children with him, skillfully balancing the child on the crossbar of his bicycle in spite of the absence of an arm. For twenty-eight years Con Tonan came to the rectory and then, before one winter began, he decided the journey was too much for him. "Arrah, I'm too old for it now" was all he said when he broke the news of his intentions. It was perhaps because his pension had come through, Mrs. Bradshaw suggested, but Grattan knew it wasn't. It was because Con Tonan was as old as he was, because he was tired.

Mrs. Bradshaw was younger. Plump and respectable, she knew all about the greater world, delighting in its conveniences as much as she deplored its excesses. She and Grattan would sit together at the kitchen table on Tuesdays and Thursdays, exchanging the scraps of news she brought for those he had heard that morning on the radio, which she herself rarely turned on.

He sensed her fondness for him—an old man who was a legend in the neighborhood simply because he'd been a part of it for so long—and sometimes asked her if it was ever said that he was going on beyond his time. Was it said that he was ineffective in his vocation, that he managed ineffectively what remained of his Church's influence in the amalgamated parishes? He was always reassured. No one wanted him to go, no one wanted some bright young curate to come out from one of the towns on alternate Sundays, to breathe life into what was hardly there.

"MR. FITZMAURICE," a red-cheeked, red-haired youth said, arriving at the rectory on a day in the early summer of 1997. "My father died."

Grattan recognized the bicycle the boy dismounted from as the big old Rudge that had once so regularly been pedalled up and down the rectory avenue. He hadn't seen a child of Con Tonan's for years, since one by one they'd all become too heavy to be carried on their father's crossbar.

"Oh, Seamus, I'm sorry. Come in, come in."

His onetime gardener had died of a stroke, a mercy he hadn't lingered: the boy was articulate, slow but clear in delivering the sombre message.

"He was speechless a day, Mr. Fitzmaurice. Then that was the end of it." His mother had sent him over, and Grattan was touched that he'd been remembered. The funeral was on Monday.

"I'll be there of course, Seamus."

He made tea and put out biscuits. He asked Seamus if he'd like a boiled egg, but Seamus said no. They talked for a while, until the tea he'd poured was cool and then drunk. Seamus was working for Kelly Bros., who were building two bungalows at Fenit Bridge.

"Are you all right yourself, Mr. Fitzmaurice?" he inquired before he mounted the bicycle that now was his. It was serving its third generation, having passed on in the same way to his father.

"Ah, I am, Seamus, I am."

"I'll be off so."

Mrs. Bradshaw brought the same tidings the next morning. A decent, quiet man, she said, which she had not said in Con Tonan's lifetime. A humble man, who had accepted without bitterness the tragedy that had changed his life. "Sure, wasn't he happy here?" her comment was, her tone adding one finality to another. She washed their coffee cups at the sink and stacked away the two saucers. She'd brought eggs, she said, the hens beginning to lay again.

On Monday he attended the funeral. He held back afterward outside the big church that still seemed new, waiting his turn with the widow. He did not know her well; he could remember meeting her only once before, a long time ago.

"He loved going over to the rectory," she said, and, as if something in the clergyman's expression indicated surprise, she said it again, her hands grasping one of his. "Oh, he did, Mr. Fitzmaurice, he did," she insisted. "It was a good thing in the end, he used to say: if he hadn't had the accident he wouldn't have got to know Ennismolach Rectory. He wouldn't have got to know yourself, sir."

Grattan Fitzmaurice drove away from the funeral, warmed by what had been said to him. Walking with his dog about the garden, which had deteriorated in the last few years, although it was not as neglected as it had been before he had help in it, he thought about the man who had died, who had become a friend. Con Tonan hadn't known what a daphne was when first he came, nor what choisya and ceanothus were called. He'd been amazed that raspberry canes were cut down to the ground in the autumn.

He'd learned how to rid the roses of suckers and when to clip the yew hedge, and not to burn the leaves that came down in autumn but to let them decay into mold to enrich the soil. The two men had talked about ordinary things: the weather, and sometimes what a new government intended to do, pondering over which promises would be easy to keep, which would have to be abandoned. In other ways they were separated, but that never mattered.

When Grattan had fed his dog on the evening of the funeral, when he'd boiled himself the couple of eggs he always had at a quarter past seven, with toast and a pot of tea, there was the sound of a car. He opened the front door a few minutes later to the younger of the two priests who had conducted the service. Smiling, hand out, Father Leahy said, "I thought I'd come over."

He said it easily, as if he were in the habit of calling in regularly at the rectory, as if he knew from long experience that this was a good moment. But neither he nor Father MacPartlan had ever driven up to Ennismolach Rectory before.

"Come in, come in," Grattan invited. The curate's handshake had been firm, the kind you can feel the friendliness in.

"Isn't that a lovely evening, Mr. Fitzmaurice? Are we in for a heat wave?"

"I'd say we might be."

In the big drawing room all the furniture was old but not old enough to be valuable: armchairs and a sofa shabby from wear, plant stands and rickety little tables with books and ornaments on them, sun-browned wallpaper cluttered with pictures and photographs, a tarnished-looking glass huge above the white marble mantelpiece, a card table with a typewriter on it. The long curtains—once two shades of blue—were almost colorless now and in need of repair.

"You'll take a cup of tea, Father?"

"Ah no, no. Thanks, though, Mr. Fitzmaurice."

"Well, we've lost poor Con."

"God rest him."

"I missed him when coming out here was too much for him in the end."

Glancing beside him as he sat down, Grattan noticed the *Irish Times*, where earlier he had placed it on the table by his armchair, having glanced through the headlines. His eye had been caught then, as it was now, by the grinning countenance of Father Brendan Smyth being taken into custody by a grim-faced detective. "PAEDOPHILE PRIEST IS EXTRADITED," the headline ran. He reached out and turned the newspaper over.

"What's the rush to settle down? You're only fifty-four."

"You'd miss Con, of course." There was a pause, and then Father Leahy added, "You're a long way from the world here."

"I'm used to that."

He wondered if his gesture with the paper had been noticed. He had meant it as a courtesy, but a courtesy could be offensive. Long way from the world or not, it was impossible not to be aware of the Norbertine priest's twenty-year-long persecution of children in Belfast. One sentence already served in Magilligan Prison in County Derry, he was now on his way to face seventy-four similar charges in Dublin: all day yesterday the news had been full of it.

"It was good of you to attend the funeral, Mr. Fitzmaurice."

"I was fond of Con."

The funeral service had impressed him. There'd been confidence in its ceremony and its ritual, in the solemn voice of Father MacPartlan, in Father Leahy's, in the responses of the congregation. It was there again in the two priests' gestures, hands raised to give the blessing, in the long line of communicants and the coffin borne away, the graveside exhortations. Founded on a rock, Grattan had thought: you felt that here. The varnished pews were ugly, the figure in the Stations of the Cross lifeless, but still you felt the confidence and the rock.

"Mrs. Tonan said the same thing, that it was good of you to come. 'Tis difficult sometimes for a parishioner to understand that someone of your Church would want to."

"Ah well, of course I would."

"That's what I'm saying."

There was a silence. Then Father Leahy said, "That's a great dog."

"I'd be lost without Oisín."

"You always had a dog. I always associate a dog with you in the car."

"Company." And Grattan thought you didn't often see a priest with a dog. Maybe once in a while you would, but not often. He didn't say so in case it sounded intrusive. He remembered Father Leahy as a child, one of the Leahys from the white farmhouse on the Ballytoom road. Three brothers, Grattan remembered, swinging their legs on a whitewashed wall, waving at him whenever he drove past. The priest—in his early thirties now—would be the youngest, the youngest in all the family, someone told him once. Four girls there were as well.

"We neither of us moved far off," he said, and Father Leahy nodded, affirming his understanding of how the conversation had drifted in this direction.

"We didn't, right enough," he said.

Grattan wondered why the curate had come. Had he decided to pay the visit when he saw the lone figure at the funeral? Had he come to offer half an hour of companionship, maybe out of pity? Had the two priests said after the service that perhaps the occasion had been hard to bear for a Protestant clergyman with nothing of a flock left?

"Your family are scattered?" He kept the conversation going, feeling that was required of him.

"Mostly."

The farm was still run by the brother who'd inherited it, Young Pat. The other brother was in Cleveland, Ohio. The sisters had all gone, married in different parts of the country, two in Cork.

"We used to meet up at Christmas, a few of us anyway. They'd come back to the farm, but then the girls have families of their own now. They don't want to be travelling."

"I remember you sitting on that wall."

"We used to learn off the car numbers. Not that there were many, maybe two a day. ZB 726."

"Was that my old Morris?"

"The slopy-back green Morris. You used to put out one of your indicators when you went by, waving at us. D'you remember that? The little orange yoke?"

"I bought that car from Mr. Quinlan in the Bank of Ireland. Would you have known Mr. Quinlan?"

"I would, of course. Wasn't it Quinlan himself lent my father the price of the milking parlor? A decent man."

Protestants were often called decent. You knew where you were with Protestants: that was said often in those days. Straight dealing was what was meant, the quality not begrudged. The bank manager had been the churchwarden at Ennismolach.

"Father MacPartlan remembers your father. Your mother, too."

Grattan imagined Father MacPartlan mentioning them, telling his curate about the old days, how the big houses had been burned down, the families driven from them, how the rectories had escaped. "Wouldn't you call round on the old fellow one of these evenings?" he imagined Father MacPartlan urging. "If it wouldn't be taken wrong?" And the bluff tones of the older priest continued to disturb Grattan's thoughts, instructing the curate in mercy and understanding, reminding him of the spirit of the different times. After all, it was said also, all three of them shared the cloth.

"Would you care for a stroll in the garden, Father?"

"Well, that would be grand."

Dusk had settled in. With the dog a few paces behind them, the two men passed from path to path, going slowly, shrubs and flowers pointed out: Father Leahy, like Con Tonan once, knew the name of hardly anything.

"Con knocked the garden into shape for me."

"His wife was saying you taught him the way of it."

"Oh, at first, of course. He ended knowing more than I did myself. He loved the old garden before he was done with it."

"He was a long time here."

"He was."

"Near enough the time Father MacPartlan entered the priesthood it would have been when he came to you."

The air was fragrant with the scent of night stock, there was the sound of Oisín rooting in the undergrowth. Rabbits came into the garden, and one scuttled away now.

"Father MacPartlan came off a farm, like I did myself. A lot of priests in Ireland came off a farm."

"They still do, I'm told."

"Simple enough lads at first."

"Yes."

It seemed to Grattan that they were talking about something else. Nothing was ever entirely as it seemed, he found

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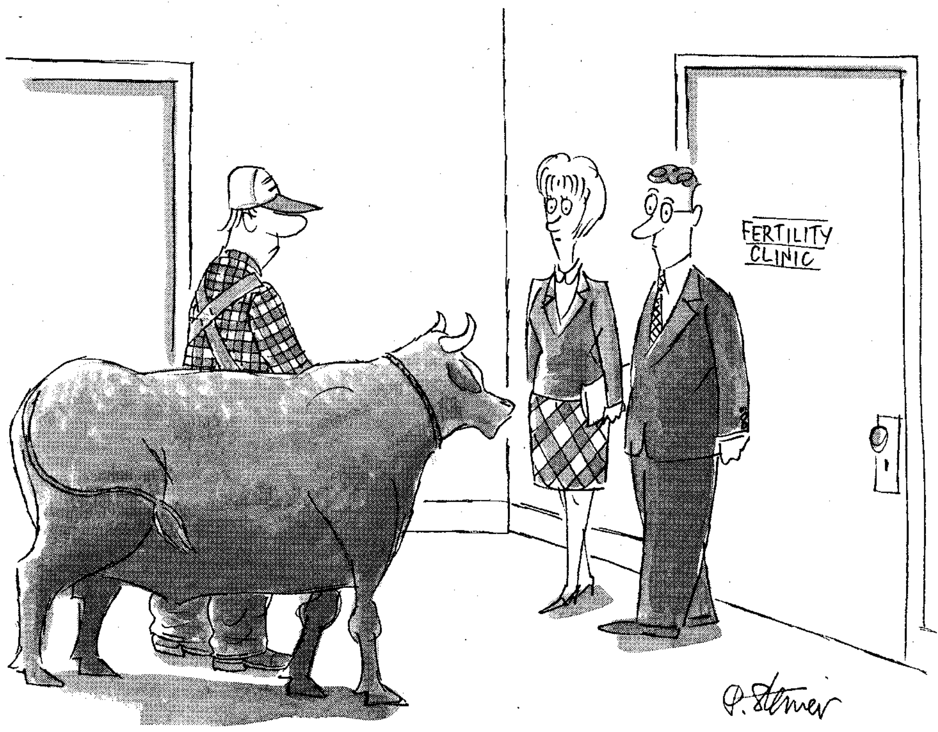


himself thinking, and didn't know why he did.

"Different for yourself, I'd say, Mr. Fitzmaurice."

Grattan laughed. "Oh, I knew what I was in for."

They stood by the barbed-wire fence at the bottom of the garden, looking out into the shadows of pastureland beyond. Heifers were grazing there, but you could hardly see them now. Shadowy themselves, the two black-clad figures turned and walked back the way they'd come. It didn't seem likely, a sudden realization came to Grattan, that the priests had spoken in the way he'd thought, that the curate had been instructed in mercy and understanding. When you imagined, you were often wrong, and again he wondered why his visitor was here.

"It's a big old house," Father Leahy said. "It would always have been a rectory, would it?"

"Oh, it was built as a rectory all right—1791."

"It'll see a few years yet."

"A lot of the clergy would prefer something smaller these days."

"But not yourself?"

"You're used to a place."

In front of the house again, twilight giving way to the dark now, they stood by Father Leahy's car, a silence gathering, the small talk of the conversation running out. Oisín ambled over the gravel and settled himself patiently on the front-door steps. Father Leahy said, "I never knew a place as peaceful."

"Any time you're nearby come in again, Father."

There was the flare of a match, then the glow of the priest's cigarette, tobacco pleasant on the evening air, mingling with the flowers.

"It wasn't easy, I daresay." Father Leahy's face was lost in the dark now, only the glow of the cigarette's tip moving, his voice going on.

"Easy, Father?"

"I meant for yourself."

It seemed to Grattan that it was possible to say that in the dark, when it hadn't been before, that truth could flourish in the dark, that in the dark communication was easier.

"Time was, a priest in Ireland wouldn't read the *Irish Times*. Father MacPartlan remarks on that. But we take it in now."

"I thought maybe that picture—"

"There's more to it all than what that picture says."

Something about the quiet tone of voice bewildered Grattan. And there were intimations beneath the tone that startled him. Father Leahy said, "It's where we've ended."

So softly that was spoken Grattan hardly heard it, and then it was repeated, increasing his bewilderment. Why did it seem he was being told the confidence that the priests possessed was a surface that had lingered beyond its day? Why, listening, did he receive that intimation? Why did it seem he was being told there was illusion, somewhere, in the solemn voices, hands raised in blessing, the holy water, the cross made in the air? At Ennismolach, long ago, there had been the traps and the sidecars and the dog carts lined up along the Sunday verges, as the cars were lined up now outside the Church of the Holy Assumption. The same sense of nourishment there'd been, the safe foundation on a rock that could not shatter. Why did it seem he was being reminded of that past?

"But surely," he began to say, and changed his mind, leaving the two words uselessly on their own. He often read in the paper these days that in the towns Mass was not as well attended as it had been even a few years ago. In the towns marriage was not always bothered with, confession and absolution passed by. A different culture, they called it, in which restraint and prayer were not the way, as once they had been. Crime spread in the different culture, they said, and drugs taken by children, and old women raped, and murder. A plague it was, and it would reach the country, too, was reaching it already. The jolly Norbertine man of God grinned from the newspaper photograph in village shops and farmhouse kitchens, on cottage dressers, propped up against milk jugs at mealtimes, and he grinned again on television screens. Would he say that all he ever did was to reach out and gather in his due, that God had made him so? In the different culture Christ's imitation offered too little.

"I often think of those monks on the islands," Father Leahy said. "Any acre they'd spot out on the sea they would row off to to see could they start a community there."

"They would."

"Cowled against the wind. Or cowled against what's left behind. Afraid, Father MacPartlan says. When Father MacPartlan comes in to breakfast you can see the rims of his eyes red."

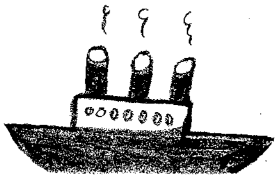
An image of the older priest was vivid for a moment in Grattan's recall, his mourning black, the collar cutting into pink flesh, hair that had thinned and gone gray during the years of their acquaintanceship. That this man wept in the night was barely credible.

"I never left Ireland," Father Leahy said. "I never been outside it."

"Nor I." The silence after that was part of the dark, easily there, not awkward. And Grattan said, "I love Ireland."

They loved it in different ways: unspoken in the dark, that was another intimation. For Grattan there was history's tale, regrets and sorrows and distress, the voices of unconquered men, the spirit of women as proud as empresses. For Grattan there were the rivers he knew, the mountains he had never climbed, wild fuchsia by a seashore and the swallows that came back, turf smoke on the air of little towns, the quiet in long glens. The sound, the look, the shape of Ireland, and Ireland's rain and Ireland's sunshine, and Ireland's living and Ireland's dead: all that.

On Sundays, when Mass had been said and said again, Father Leahy stood in a crowd watching the men of Kildare and Kerry, of Offaly and Meath, yelling out encouragement, deploring some lack of skill. And afterward he took his pint as any man might, talking the game through. For Father Leahy there was the memory of the cars going by, his bare feet on the cobbles of the yard, the sacrifice he had made, and his faithful coming to him, the cross emblazoned on a holy robe. Good Catholic Ireland, a golden age.



"Anywhere you'd be," Grattan said, "there's always change. Like day becoming night."

"I know. Sure, I know, of course."

Father Leahy's cigarette dropped onto the ground. There was the sound of his shoe crunching away the spark left in the butt, then his footsteps began on the gravel. A light came on when he opened the car door.

"You're not left bereft, you know," Grattan said.

"Father MacPartlan looked over the table tonight after he'd put sugar in his tea. What he said to me was you'd given Con Tonan his life back. Even though Con Tonan wasn't one of your own."

"Ah no, no, I didn't do that."

"D'you know the way it sometimes is, you want to tell a person a thing?"

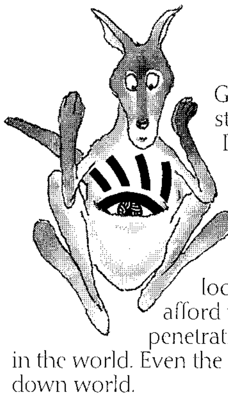
The curate's hand was held out in the little pool of light, and there was the same friendliness in the clasp before he started the car's engine.

"Father Leahy called in last night," Grattan heard himself reporting to Mrs. Bradshaw. "The first time a priest ever came to the rectory that I remember." And Mrs. Bradshaw, astonished, would think about it all morning while she worked, and would probably say before she left that the curate calling in was an expression of the ecumenical spirit they were all on about these days. Something like that.

For a few more minutes Grattan remained outside, a trace of tobacco smoke still in the garden, the distant hum of the curate's car not quite gone. The future was frightening for Father Leahy, as it had been for the monks who rowed away from Ireland once, out onto their rocks; as it had been for his father on his deathbed. But the monks and his father had escaped, mercy granted them. The golden age of the bishops was vanishing in a drama that was as violent as the burning of the houses and the fleeing of the families, and old priests like Father MacPartlan were made melancholy by their loss and passed their melancholy on.

"Come on, Oisín," Grattan called, for his dog had wandered into the garden. "Come on, now."

He had paid Con Tonan what he could; he'd been glad of his company. He had never thought of Con Tonan in his garden as a task he'd been given, as a single tendril of the vine to make his own. But the priest had come this evening to say it had been so, and by saying it had found a solace for himself. Small gestures mattered now, and statements in the dark were a way to keep the faith, as the monks had kept it in an Ireland that was different, too. ♦



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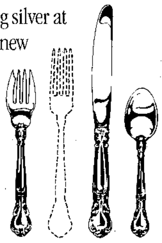

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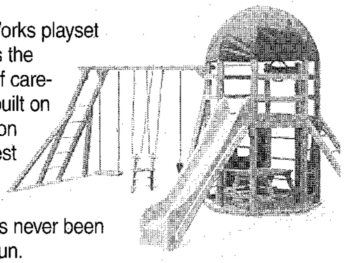

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

SCORING FOR OSCAR

The thrills and chills of composing in Hollywood.

BY ALEX ROSS

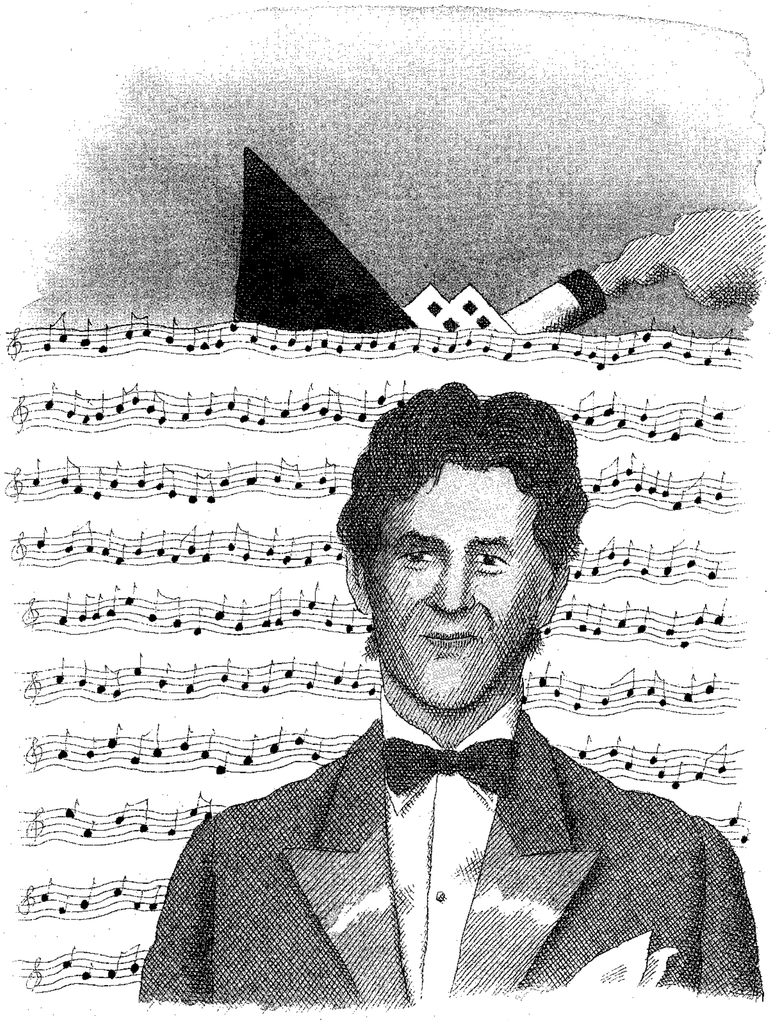
A MAN named James Horner has just become one of the most commercially successful composers of the century. He wrote the music for the film "Titanic." The general "Titanic" hysteria, which has boosted four "Titanic"-related books and a fittingly slender biography of Leonardo DiCaprio onto the *Times* best-seller lists, has put Horner in many homes. A recording of his "Titanic" score has sold ten million copies, according to Sony Classical, and has held the No. 1 spot on the *Billboard* pop chart for six weeks. No original orchestral piece has reached the top of the charts since "Dr. Zhivago," in 1966. One may have to go back to the days of Richard Strauss to find a more or less classical composition that has made so much money so fast. Strauss built his mountain villa with the proceeds from "Salome." Horner may be ready to make a down payment on a very big house.

So who is he? Many people, it turns out. He is a composer who is generous enough to assimilate into his own music the work of less fortunate predecessors. In his score for "Aliens" he sampled the opening of Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony. In his score for "Willow" he helpfully simplified the first theme of Schumann's "Rhenish" Symphony. In the title theme of "Glory" he took the "Humming Chorus" from Prokofiev's "Ivan the Terrible" and grafted on Elgar's "Enigma Variations." Up to a point, such borrowings are not surprising: Hollywood composers work under cruel deadlines and sometimes take creative shortcuts. But Horner goes beyond the pale; he is a kleptomaniac who recycles not only others' work but also his own. Lately, he has switched from classical bric-a-brac to a New Age Celtic sound, with cooing pipes and electronic choirs. When this material appeared in Horner's score for the Scottish epic "Braveheart," it was roughly apt, but in "Titanic" it causes confusion. You wonder, when you first see the ship with Horner's accompaniment, whether the Titanic will set sail from Belfast rather than from the usual Southampton, or whether Leonardo DiCaprio is going to try an Irish accent. In fact, the music is too vague to be associated with any particular place or mood; it's reminiscent of that deracinated vocalise you hear in overpriced boutiques.

Teen-age "Titanic" fans may not swoon for long to this music once they've taken it home. Horner, who studied at the Royal College of Music and then graduated to Roger Corman's B-movie shop, is set to become the biggest phenomenon in the history of used-CD stores. Of course, it's not the job of a film score to become a permanent recorded masterpiece. If a score is inordinately interesting—if it draws attention to itself—it has failed in its purpose. A few crossed signals aside, the "Titanic" music does accomplish one basic task: it manages to be innocuous, to stay out of the way of the raw impact of the film. But it offers nothing else: it does not reinforce the film's deeper emotions or grander images, and it offers no satisfying detail. Movies, in a way, are like Gothic cathedrals: a lot of meticulous labor goes into obscure corners of the structure. When the score, the editing, the sets, and the rest are excellent in every part, the experience of the film grows. You can keep ambling through it and finding minor beauties. Great scores helped make great films of "Vertigo," "The Godfather," "Once Upon a Time in the West," and "Chinatown," among others; music becomes a second landscape in which to roam. "Titanic" aimed for that greatness, and Horner insured that it would fall short.

What does Horner's windfall say about the artistic health of Hollywood composing? If he wins an Oscar for Best

Original Dramatic Score, prospects for the art will seem bleak. Then again no one should be surprised to know that the Academy Award voters seldom do justice to this category. Film scoring is, like editing or costume design, one of those "below the line" industries whose practices remain arcane, even to many in the movie business. And in truth composers should be judged not only by what they produce but also by what they must put up with. They arrive late in the process and must churn out an hour or more of music in a few weeks. Their work may be rearranged back to front, or chopped into fragments, or thrown away altogether. It takes a rapid, inventive mind to thrive in such conditions and still stay honest. The four other nominees this year—Jerry Goldsmith, for "L.A. Confidential"; John Williams, for "Amistad"; Danny Elfman, for "Good Will Hunting"; and Philip Glass, for "Kundun"—measure up, for the most part, to that standard. They have written music that underpins the images and lingers in the memory. Who deserves to win? And how does contemporary movie music compare with its sometimes glorious past?



James Horner: The "Titanic" composer recycles his own and other's work.

PIERRE LE-TAN

FILM fascinated composers right from the start. The new medium looked like a new kind of opera, without tenors. None other than Camille Saint-Saëns, the grand old man of French music, inaugurated the genre, in 1908, with a score for a silent called "L'Assassinat du Duc de Guise." A magnificent roster of composers wrote for film in the twenties and thirties: Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Benjamin Britten, William Walton, Arthur Honegger, Erik Satie, and a dozen other famous names. Back then, film composers had more freedom than they are given today; often, they were more famous than the directors. Sergei Eisenstein reëdited certain sequences of "Alexander Nevsky" and "Ivan the Terrible" to match what Prokofiev had composed, and Abel Gance was similarly respectful of Honegger. Only a handful of directors in the sound era have developed that kind of close creative relationship with a composer. Sergio Leone began shooting "Once Upon a Time in the West" *after* Ennio Morricone had written his score, and Alfred Hitchcock shot extended, uneventful sequences that were little more than molds for the musical fury of Bernard Herrmann. "I have left Reel 3 for you," Hitchcock would say to Herrmann.

Within a few years of the introduction of sound, Hollywood had built a production line for orchestral music. The first master of the business was Max Steiner, a tune-spewing Viennese who immigrated to America in 1914 and to Hollywood in 1929. Steiner's score for "King Kong" showed that music could play as powerful a role in talking pictures as it had in the silents. "King Kong" also set a pattern that continues to this day: sci-fi, fantasy, and horror genres allow composers the most freedom. Steiner inserted Schoenbergian dissonances in his score which would have dismayed a concert audience of the day. A contemporary adept like Jerry Goldsmith has written some of his best music for movies like "Alien," "Capricorn One," and "The Omen."

In 1934, Warner Bros. took movie music closer to high art by hiring Erich Wolfgang Korngold, the composing wunderkind of turn-of-the-century Vienna. Korngold seized control of the Warners orchestra and turned it into a topflight ensemble. Alfred Newman, the patriarch of a musical family that still wields influence in Hollywood today (through his nephew Randy and his sons Thomas and David), created a similar environment at Fox. Korngold set the tone for film music of the thirties and forties; his sumptuous harmonies and octave-leaping themes put a Wagnerian nimbus around the swordplay of Errol Flynn. Already celebrated for his opera "Die Tote Stadt," Korngold raised the profile of the Hollywood composer significantly. He insisted, for example, that the composer, and not the studio music executive, receive credit at the Oscar ceremony, and when his score for "Anthony Adverse" won a pseudonymous Oscar in 1937 he angrily responded that a film score "equals a symphony in volume and length."

Korngoldian romanticism flourished in the hands of others, notably Miklós Rózsa and Franz Waxman; it reached an apex with Max Steiner's grandly swooping title theme for "Gone with the Wind." But after the Second World War producers asked for a harder, more modern sound. In 1951, Alex North wrote a pathbreaking jazz score for "A Streetcar Named Desire," and David Raksin and Elmer Bernstein adopted an angular, jazz-inflected idiom in such movies as "Force of Evil" and "The Man with the Golden Arm." Leonard Rosenman atonally ac-

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"If you were slipping inexorably into psychosis, you'd tell me, wouldn't you?"

companied the adolescent writhings of James Dean. The greatest of all was Bernard Herrmann, whose career stretched from "Citizen Kane" (1941) to "Taxi Driver" (1976). He declined to illustrate every twist of the action, as Steiner and Korngold had done; instead, he shrouded images in augmented chords, fragmentary melodies, and low-lying orchestration. His textures functioned as an emotional ground bass to the action on the screen. (The Varèse Sarabande label has recently been rerecording Herrmann's scores with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. "Vertigo" and "Psycho" emerge as free-form masterpieces, half familiar and half unknown.)

In the sixties and early seventies, the symphonic score went into decline. Rat Pack and Elvis movies, "A Hard Day's Night," "Easy Rider," and other fusions of film and pop created a fad for song-heavy soundtracks. Synthesizers were also coming into fashion. The studio system began to break up, and so did the studio orchestras. But Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, with their reverence for the thirties swashbucklers, stopped the decline by giving the composer John Williams a major role in their blockbusters of the mid-seventies—"Jaws," "Star Wars," and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." Here, again, was a Korngoldian approach, in which music swamped nearly every frame of the movie and commented alertly on the action. Williams signalled his awareness of the past by basing his "Superman" theme on Korngold's "Kings Row." Unlike James Horner, however, Williams recreates more often than he imitates; he is an accomplished pasticheur, able to make music of any image thrown his way. As such, he is a master of his art, even if he has no style to call his own.

In the nineties, movie music finds itself enriched by a long history. The most innovative composers know that history and fight against it. Here's a common scenario: Before the composer arrives on the scene, the director has been editing his rough cut with what is called a "temp track"—a temporary assortment of cues drawn from preëxisting scores. Very often, the director grows fond of the temp track, and the composer is essentially told to duplicate it or supply a smattering of original touches. This practice of musical inbreeding is particularly endemic to action movies. Composers for the likes of "The Rock," "Con Air," and "Face/Off" draw on an increasingly limited set of devices—static minor-key sequences, monotonous electronic beats, pompous male choruses, and pseudo-baroque patterns that heavy-metal guitarists would find tedious. Sensitive dramas, meanwhile, are given greeting-card music, with tinkling piano. Still, a fair number of composers—Danny Elfman, Howard Shore, and Elliot Goldenthal come to mind—have managed to resist these formulas and write music that sounds fresh with each picture. Hornerism is not yet triumphant.

THE first thing to be noticed about the music nominations is that the Academy has divided one category into two: members now vote for Best Original Dramatic Score and Best Original Musical or Comedy Score. (A contributor to *Film Score Monthly*, a magazine that covers the business incisively, has proposed a third category for Horner: Best Adapted Score with Original Material.) The division was made last year, evidently because Disney musicals were winning almost every year. Second, one notices the inevitable citation of John Williams. You can applaud Williams's expertise and still wonder at the Academy's habit of nominating him for simply showing up. He has been nominated thirty-one times since 1968; not even Max Steiner, the Benzedrine-addicted author of three hundred scores, reached that number. Williams did produce one unusually fine score this year, "Seven Years in Tibet," with ornate cello solos by Yo-Yo Ma and some soulful experiments in the style of mystic minimalism. But he was nominated instead for his pop-African choruses in "Amistad"—apparently a knee-jerk response to the Spielberg name.

At least a couple of Williams's Oscars should have gone to Jerry Goldsmith, who, after forty years in Hollywood, has been recognized only for "The Omen." He has brought various modernist devices into film music—aleatory passages in the manner of the sixties Polish avant-garde, atonal passagework on the piano, all manner of exotic percussion—while pulling off the basic melodic seductions that a potential blockbuster requires. His score for "Chinatown" remains his best work. It ranges from a broad, bluesy trumpet theme to Henry Cowell-like strummings inside the piano, yet the whole is somehow vitally Californian, in tune with the complex period sensibility of the film. (It's tempting to imagine the synthesis that Goldsmith might have produced for "Titanic": the disaster has rich musical associations, from the bittersweet classical kitsch played by the ship's band to the bitterly funny African-American ballads that tore into the Titanic mythology.) Goldsmith's music for "L.A. Confidential,"

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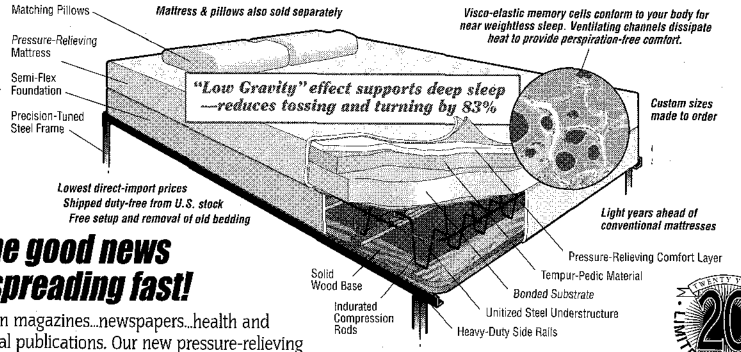
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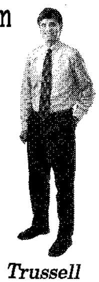

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which the Academy nominated, is typically excellent, although, like the movie, it leans too much on the example of "Chinatown." Stronger was his tense, martial score for "Air Force One," which he wrote in three weeks, after a Randy Newman effort fell flat.

The nomination of Philip Glass for "Kundun" signals an intriguing recent development: a give-and-take between Hollywood and the world of classical music. Both Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein tried to make such a connection after the Second World War, but backed off after writing, respectively, "The Heiress" and "On the Waterfront." Now Glass, Michael Nyman, John Corigliano, Elliot Goldenthal, and Tan Dun are giving it a try again. Whether they will be able to sustain a "double life"—to convince Hollywood and concert audiences alike—remains to be seen. Certainly Martin Scorsese, a director with a very sharp ear, knew what to expect when he hired Glass for "Kundun": the composer's trance-inducing minimalist style is ready-made for the meditative rhythms of the film, and the film may have been edited with Glass in mind. If anything, the match is too nearly perfect: hypnosis causes drowsiness. Nyman, the English minimalist, had a similarly beautifying, enervating effect on "Gattaca," an arty sci-fi film that appeared and disappeared last year. (Still, "Gattaca" did offer one fine musical joke: it showed, as an example of genetic engineering run amok, a twelve-fingered pianist playing a creepily embroidered version of Schubert's G-Flat Major Impromptu.)

Danny Elfman, the former leader of the New Wave group Oingo Boingo, came to prominence in Hollywood with his scores for Tim Burton's "Beetlejuice" and "Batman." His rock origins and lack of classical training raised doubts at the start; some established composers considered him a "hummer"—Hollywood slang for a would-be composer who can't read music and relies on ghostwriters. (Charlie Chaplin was a hummer.) Elfman's double nomination this year—for "Good Will Hunting," in the Dramatic category, and "Men in Black," in Musical or Comedy—suggests that he has finally won respect. Elfman is an expert parodist: in comedy scores—as in his "Simpsons" TV theme, for instance—he favors a kind of off-kilter oompah music spiked with wrong notes and uneven rhythms. Prokofiev's ballet music and Nino Rota's surreal scores for Fellini films are his models. Yet he's also capable of richer, darker sonorities. His "Good Will Hunting" score takes second place in the movie to the wistful indie-rock ballads of Elliott Smith, but it contributes at crucial points to the story's smart, surprising sentimentalism. Elfman sets out some placid-sounding chord progressions and then tweaks tones of the scale up and down, creating a static yet unstable texture. He thus seems to get inside the mind of the title character, a brilliant, difficult kid resisting the assurances of therapy.

The major omission in these nominations is Howard Shore's eerie score for "The Game." Like Elfman, Shore has the disadvantage of coming to Hollywood from commercial pop—he was the music director during the first years of "Saturday Night Live"—and he has also specialized in the Academy-unfriendly genres of horror and gruesome crime. Shore, however, may well be the most imaginative composer who has worked in Hollywood since Herrmann. His signature sound is a distant, slow-moving procession of mostly dissonant chords, which are low enough in volume not to intrude upon the consciousness of filmgoers yet dismal enough to stir unconscious feelings of alarm. The disquiet that the serial-killer epic "Seven" induced in audiences owed as much to Shore's soft clusters as to David Fincher's glistening, chilling images. A similar texture is heard in "The Game": it fixes the downward spiral of the Michael Douglas character, whose life is being destroyed by a campaign of pranks. Shore also adds a fast, quiet stream of polytonal figuration on the piano, a kind of unravelling arpeggio that seems to mirror the unravelling of Douglas's life. All that menace is a foil for the movie's shocking comic ending, in which Shore's pop panache is let loose in an explosion of swing.

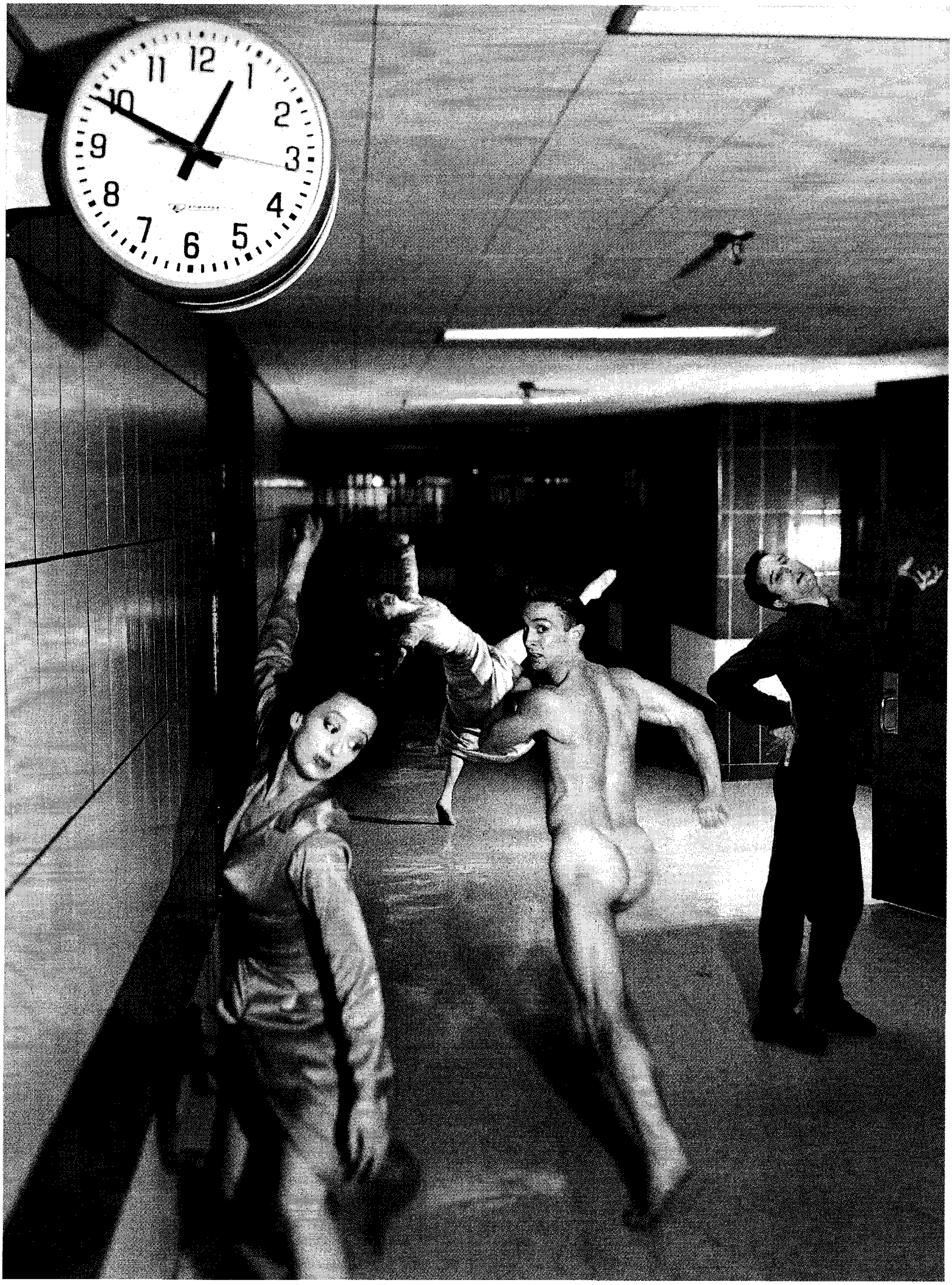
I have been browsing through stacks of film-score CDs in search of other glimmers of quality. For the most part, it's a depressing exercise. There is a pathos in listening to, say, John Frizzell's "Alien Resurrection," which tries to compensate with sheer volume for the weakness of the film. Those testosterone thumps sound silly in my living room. As Hollywood history had led me to expect, however, I made interesting discoveries in the sci-fi and horror departments. For example, I had all but given up on Michael Kamen, an erratic composer who began brilliantly in the eighties with a theme-and-variations score for Terry Gilliam's "Brazil," but who recently churned out Windham Hill piano goo for "The Winter Guest." I put on the soundtrack for "Event Horizon" and found Kamen liberated: he'd fashioned imposing but distant-sounding orchestral textures and combined them with electronic noise from the ambient group Orbital. Another sci-fi score I liked was Joel Goldsmith's music for the television series "Stargate SG-1." I had not been aware of the existence of a "Stargate" series. It may not be worth searching out for the musical contributions of the junior Goldsmith, who is Jerry Goldsmith's son, but I liked his plowing, Prokofievian ostinatos and sinuous chromatic lines.

These scattered surprises in the wildly uneven world of movie music remind me of something Bernard Herrmann said in an interview with the film scholar Royal S. Brown, in 1975, a few months before his death. He said: "I gave a talk at the British Film Institute. I told the audience, 'Remember old maps, before World War I, how the world had big white spots every now and then? You looked down below, it said "White, Unexplored." That's film music. It's all unexplored.'" ♦

FLASH ACT

Perhaps no choreographer blends a flair for improvisation and a respect for design better than Paul Taylor, whose company appears at City Center, in its twenty-fourth season, from March 3rd through March 15th. Take a recent early-evening photo shoot at New York's high school of performing arts. As the dancer Patrick Corbin began warming up in a T-shirt and nylon sweats, the photographer liked the contrast between him and his costumed colleagues (Francie Huber, Caryn Heilman, and Andrew Asnes, suited up for Taylor's apocalyptic "Last Look"). But the choreographer worried that Alex Katz, the artist who designed the costumes, wouldn't like to see street clothes sullying his elegant vision. "Shoot Patrick in his underwear," Taylor advised. "No, have him run naked." Corbin consented. "It's liberating in a way," the dancer said. "Have you ever been in a school running down a hall naked? I don't even know if it's legal."

Photograph by Max Vadukul



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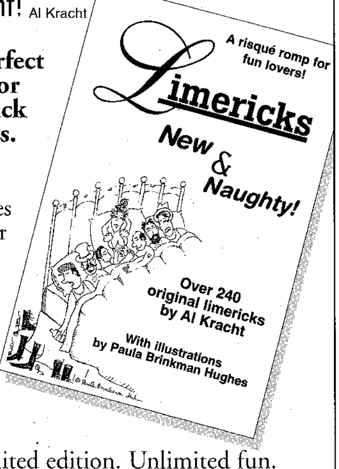
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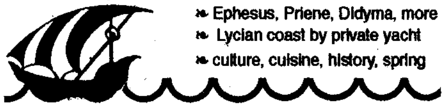

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BOOKS

FEMMES FATALES

Women who kill: The new postfeminist icons.

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

It was a cold winter day in Schenectady, New York, just before Christmas, 1985, when Marybeth Tinning attended the funeral of her four-month-old daughter, Tami Lynne. Everything was to be just so. Marybeth had even purchased a little bonnet to match Tami Lynne's Christmas dress—the dress in which she would be buried. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep," Marybeth whispered over her daughter's coffin. "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

But this was not the first time the Lord had taken the soul of one of Marybeth's children: it was the ninth. Back in 1972, Marybeth's third child, Jennifer, died of meningitis when she was eight days old. A few weeks later, Marybeth's second child, two-year-old Joe, Jr., died, also apparently of a viral infection. Three months later, it was Marybeth's first child, five-year-old Barbara, who arrived in the emergency room of Schenectady's St. Clare's Hospital, apparently suffering from a fatal case of cardiac arrest. Over the next thirteen years, six more Tinning children followed Jennifer to the grave: Timothy, Nathan, Mary Frances, Jonathan, Michael, and, finally, little blond Tami Lynne.

An Oscar Wilde character once observed that to lose one parent may be regarded as misfortune but to lose both looks like carelessness. Alas, in the case of Marybeth Tinning, it took nine dead children before the Schenectady police decided to investigate. Yes, there had been a few calls to the child-abuse hot line over the years, and the children's succession of deadly ailments did seem a bit odd, when their parents were perfectly healthy. But Marybeth had been so grief-stricken each time one of her offspring fell ill that it seemed crazy and cruel to suspect her. After all, what kind of mother would kill her own children?

According to the authors of two new books on women and violence, Marybeth's children were the victims of one of the most stubborn redoubts of male chauvinism: sex bias in the detection of crime. Michael D. Kelleher and C. L. Kelleher, in "Murder Most Rare: The Female Serial Killer" (Praeger; $26.95), and Patricia Pearson, in "When She Was Bad: Violent Women and the Myth of Innocence" (Viking; $24.95), argue that while we've grown accustomed to women brokering stocks and running for office, we still balk at the idea that they can be as violent as men. We ascribe the unexplained death of a young child to sudden infant death syndrome rather than investigate the mother. Indeed, according to these authors, not only do we often fail to recognize a murderess in our midst even when she leaves obvious clues; we also suffer from a kind of cultural amnesia which makes us forget what we've learned about homicidal women in the past. "Whereas the male serial killer has been regularly lionized by his outrageous exploits," the two Kellehers write, in protest, "the female serial killer is typically ignored, viewed as an anomaly, or given far less serious attention than her crimes warrant."

Just as an earlier wave of feminist literary historians in the seventies and the eighties championed forgotten female authors, so this new group of nineties feminists has made it its business to discover murderous and otherwise unpleasant women from the past in order that they can receive the recognition they have long deserved. It must be one of the odder developments of late-stage feminism that the recognition of female criminals has come to seem to these authors a matter of considerable importance. Admittedly, this may be a weightier issue than gender-based price discrimination in hair salons and dry cleaners—the subject of another recent, late-stage feminist crusade in New York. At stake, after all, is not only the apprehension of violent criminals but also the same chivalrous notions that have proved to be such impediments for women in other areas—the military, for example. Still, the solemnity with which the authors approach their topic makes for a kind of grotesque, inadvertent humor as they fight to win their murderers and husband batterers access to the criminal canon.

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The authors of two new books fight to win female serial killers, husband batterers, and murderous mothers access to the criminal canon.

STEVEN DANA

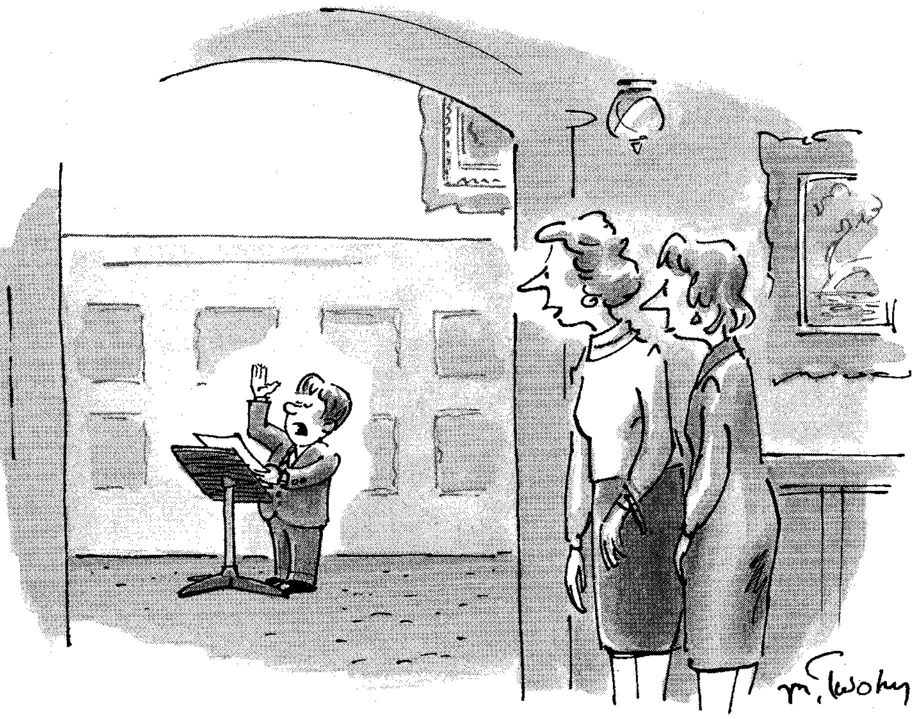
THE two Kellehers are the *encyclopédistes* of female violence. Not only have these diligent authors collected a vast number of gruesome tales; they have also drawn up a taxonomic chart for each killer, in which the killer's type, birth information, "active period," motive, and method are precisely specified, with statistics where those are applicable. In addition, they have organized their female serial killers into handy categories, such as Black Widow and Angel of Death. The message that emerges from this collection of tales is clear enough: be a woman, act like a woman, and you may blithely strew your neighborhood with bloody axes and severed heads, since the chances are that you will get away with murder.

Consider Black Widows—women who mate and kill. One of the most successful murderesses of this type was Vera Renczi, a rich Hungarian born at the turn of the century, who suffered from a terrible case of jealousy. She married two men and killed each of them when she suspected him of being unfaithful; subsequently she dispensed with marriage and simply took lover after lover, each of whom she dispatched in short order while complaining to the neighbors that he had abandoned her, as men are liable to do. At one point, her son became suspicious, so she killed him, too, but for many years no one else gave her much trouble. When Renczi was finally arrested, she immediately confessed, and led the police down to her basement, where she had stored the remains of both her husbands, her son, and thirty-two lovers in a collection of zinc coffins.

Renczi was a particularly prolific killer, but Black Widows generally manage to pull off ten or fifteen murders before they get caught. Angels of Death, though, are another story. These are women who kill people who have been placed in their professional care, such as children in hospitals or elderly patients in nursing homes. Genene Jones is probably the most prominent of the American Angels of Death. Hers may not be a household name, as Charles Manson's is, but she has been immortalized in her very own mass-murderers-and-serial-killers trading card.

Jones was a vocational nurse who worked in a series of Texas hospitals during the late seventies and early eighties. Shortly after she began working in the Bexar County Medical Center Hospital, in San Antonio, in 1981, large numbers of infants and young children began dying without apparent cause. Oddly, they all seemed to die on Jones's shift. Nor was this the only peculiarity in Jones's career at the hospital: she had been known to show up for work drunk, and at one point she informed a couple that their child had died when it hadn't. Still, Jones was clearly devoted to her work, and the following year she was offered another job, at the Kerr County Clinic, and accepted it. There, too, several children brought in for routine procedures died mysteriously, from unexpected respiratory or cardiac attacks. By the time investigators caught up with Jones, in 1983, she may have murdered as many as forty-six children.

Both Genene Jones and Marybeth Tinning are good candidates for the little-known (but far from rare) psychiatric diagnosis Munchausen syndrome by proxy. Ordinary Munchausen syndrome (a term coined in 1951) is characterized by a morbid desire for medical attention: its victims induce symptoms in themselves for the thrill of arriving prostrate in the emergency room and being swarmed over by doctors and nurses shouting complicated instructions. Sufferers from



"With the Suzuki method, they start them campaigning as early as three or four."

Munchausen syndrome by proxy hunger for the same thrill, but instead of making themselves sick they go to work on other people. Genene Jones, for instance, apparently took great pleasure in making heroic attempts to save the children she herself had poisoned.

Tinning and Jones relished the melodrama of death itself, but other female killers have taken a more sober—even a bourgeois—approach to their criminal careers, planning for the future by seeking the less ephemeral benefits of financial security or lasting achievement. Jane Toppan, a professional caregiver born in Massachusetts in 1854, may have done away with as many as a hundred people in fulfillment of her unusual ambition: "to have killed more people—more helpless people—than any man or woman who has ever lived." Tillie Gburek, a Black Widow active in Chicago early in this century, made a name for herself as a prophetess by predicting the deaths of four of her husbands, whom she poisoned with arsenic. And who could forget the notorious Mme. Popova? Popova was an enterprising Russian who ran a husband-murdering business that, presumably thanks to its discretion and its famously reasonable prices, turned quite a profit over the thirty years between 1879 and 1909. When Popova was eventually arrested (having been betrayed by a remorseful wife), she confessed to a spectacular three hundred murders, and was shot by a firing squad.

In putting together their survey, the Kellehers' principal aim seems to have been thoroughness: they have tracked down and categorized every female serial killer they could get their hands on. Patricia Pearson's book is primarily a polemic. For Pearson, opening our eyes to women's potential for violence is less an opportunity for a jaunt through the past than a matter of moral urgency: as long as we refuse to believe that women can be violent, we will be considerably handicapped in our efforts to solve women's crimes. "Women commit the majority of child homicides in the United States, a greater share of physical child abuse, an equal rate of sibling violence and assaults on the elderly, about a quarter of child sexual abuse, an overwhelming share of the killings of newborns, and a fair preponderance of spousal assaults," Pearson writes, and yet "violence is still universally considered to be the province of the male."

Pearson is more eclectic than the Kellehers, branching out from murder into all kinds of less glamorous female misbehavior, ranging from child abuse to armed robbery. She is a good reporter, and—no doubt in anticipation of conventional feminist objections—she has done the work necessary to back up even her most inflammatory ideas. She claims, for instance, that female domestic violence is routinely covered up by dogmatic feminists unwilling to contemplate the possibility that women also batter their partners. She cites a startling statistic: the person most likely to have been killed by an intimate partner in Chicago between 1966 and 1996 was not a woman but an African-American man; he was almost twice as likely to be killed as an African-American woman, and five times as likely as a woman who was white.

Pearson tells us about the predicament of Toronto man and battered boyfriend Steve Easton. Several years ago, Easton lived with a girlfriend who subjected him to constant abuse. She told him what he could and couldn't wear to work (on the ground that some of his outfits might attract his female colleagues), and if he disobeyed her she would set his entire wardrobe on fire. She forbade him to go out with his friends, and if he did she locked him out of the house. She threw bottles at him, she punched him, she pushed him through a window, and she got him fired from his job. Eventually, Easton gathered up enough strength to leave her, and went in search of battered-men counselling, only to discover that there was none to be had. A battered-women's group he contacted gave him a pamphlet entitled "Why Husband Abuse Is a Red Herring." Finally, in desperation, Easton formed a battered-men's organization of his own. That was in 1993; it now runs a support group and receives thousands of phone calls each year.

Needless to say, battered men have to deal not only with the usual injuries and humiliations that women face in similar situations but also with the additional embarrassment of being thought wimpy by unsympathetic acquaintances. After all, men are stronger, aren't they? Can't they defend themselves? Hit back? The problem, as Pearson sensibly points out, is that hitting a woman can seem like regular old male violence rather than self-defense, even to the man involved. What's more, in a relationship (as opposed to an encounter between strangers) the issue is not so much brute strength as the will to harm. A woman determined to terrorize her boyfriend into abjection, in other words, will be much more dangerous than a guy like Steve Easton, who just wishes everything could be O.K. again, the way it was before.

For Pearson, though, the worst consequence of gender bias in the treatment of violence is the way it infantilizes women. In supposing that a woman can't be truly responsible for her violent acts, we are treating her as if she were a child, denying her full moral personhood. In Pearson's view, the most egregious instance of this is the fact that women are systematically passed over for execution. Right now, one out of every eight people arrested for murder is a woman, yet women account for only one out of seventy people on death row, and for only two out of four hundred and thirty-two people executed since 1976. Thus Pearson campaigns passionately for the end of gender discrimination on death row. Karla Faye Tucker was one of the lucky ones, it would seem—one of the few women whose crimes were really taken seriously.

A more typical case of blatant discrimination is that of Guinevere Garcia, an Illinois murderess who was condemned to death for killing her ex-husband in 1991. Garcia has declared that she feels fully responsible for the murder, deserves the death penalty, and is willing to let her execution go forward. Despite her protestations, however, her sentence was commuted to life in prison in 1996, after Bianca Jagger, among others, argued before a prisoner review board that Garcia, a battered woman who had endured a difficult life, couldn't be held accountable for what she'd done. In an angry opinion piece for the *Times*, Pearson argued that this decision constituted gender bias, and that Garcia should be expeditiously put to death.

If Pearson appears a tad gruesome in her eagerness for gender-neutral extermination, her larger crusade, for women's moral equality, is undoubtedly worthwhile. The only problem with her argument is that she imagines her claims about female violence to be a radical departure from conventional wisdom. If they are, it's the conventional wisdom of some brief and distant moment—the eighteen-eighties, perhaps. Pearson claims, bafflingly, that Western women are "perceived, collectively, as angels in their houses, capable only of caring, nurturance, and submission." But, what with Medea, Lizzie Borden, evil stepmothers, and any number of other such enduring popular icons, most of us surely remember that women are not always as lovable as they look.

Even in the days when "angel in the house" notions were more familiar than they are now, such ideals were always accompanied by images of women as whores and witches. At present, certainly, violent women seem to be all over the news—killing daughters in exorcisms, stabbing college roommates to death, driving children into lakes, throwing out newborns at the prom. And all this isn't just in the papers: in the past decade, there has been a veritable outpouring of violent-women movies—among them "Thelma & Louise," "Heavenly Creatures," "To Die For," "Serial Mom," "Fatal Attraction," "Basic Instinct," "The Last Seduction," and "The Long Kiss Goodnight." What we do tend to assume is that women and men are violent in different ways—that men are wild and public and axe prostitutes in dark alleys, whereas women are sneaky and private and poison their husbands or smother their kids. But, at least on the basis of the evidence offered by the two Kellehers and by Pearson herself, this prejudice appears to be justified, and might well be one of the reasons that female criminals get less attention.

Not to worry. A few more movies like "Serial Mom," a few more dogma-destroying crusaders like Pearson and the Kellehers, and we will soon come to embrace women for the homicidal maniacs that every one of them has the potential to be. Of course, as with any social transformation, this one may not turn out exactly as we'd planned. Already, we're beginning to realize that our homes are far more treacherous than our streets. How long will it be before we nervously begin to push our food around at Thanksgiving dinner while wondering what our loved one meant when she coaxed us, with that mysterious smile, to "eat up"? How long before little children, waking screaming from a nightmare, stifle their shrieks lest a real monster, in a bathrobe and fluffy slippers, should venture in to comfort them? ♦

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ANSWERS TO 8 x 10 CRYPTIC NO. 34

ACROSS

1	SANG (hidden)
4	A(M)ES (*sea* rev.)
9	ABODE (anag.)
10	REAL + M
11	INFERNOS (anag.)
13	A + TOM
14	G + ATE
16	TRE + ATING (*giant* anag.)
18	SO(N)AR
19	MOIRA (anag.)
20	ERAS (2 defs.)
21	T + R(A)M (rev.)

DOWN

1	SP + RING + TI + ME (*it* rev.)
2	AMEN (hidden)
3	GALES (anag.)
5	MOUNTAINS (anag.)
6	rED WOOD
7	SEISMOGRAM (anag.)
8	CA + FETE + RIA (*air* rev.)
12	H + ARBOR
15	STO(A)T (rev.)
17	NAP + A

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BRIEFLY NOTED

RIVEN ROCK, by T. Coraghessan Boyle (Viking; $24.95). Boyle's latest novel is a meditative but never maudlin case study of "sexual hypochondrial neurasthenia." In 1904, Stanley McCormick, an heir to the Harvester fortune, marries Katherine Dexter, a Boston débutante and M.I.T. graduate, but he soon becomes thoroughly unhinged, and is shipped off to Santa Barbara, where he is destined to live out his days on a family estate. Cooped up behind bars and denied visits from his wife, Stanley becomes the center of a strange, all-male galaxy of doctors, nurses, and cooks, along with various other primates. (One of the doctors turns the property into an ape reserve.) In Boyle's assured hands, this odd American tale turns into a bracing examination of misogyny, mental illness, and the shadowy side of love.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER: A STORY OF TWO TOWNS, A DEATH, AND AMERICA'S DILEMMA, by Alex Kotlowitz (Talese-Doubleday; $24.95). In May, 1991, the body of a black teen-ager, Eric McGinnis, was fished from the St. Joseph River, which divides two Michigan towns—St. Joseph, white and prosperous, and Benton Harbor, black and impoverished. To this day, nobody knows how McGinnis died. Kotlowitz's literary investigation is a densely realistic, humane portrait of the two communities, which shows why the inhabitants of St. Joseph believe that McGinnis's death was an accident and the inhabitants of Benton Harbor believe that he was murdered by whites.

JANE AUSTEN: A LIFE, by Claire Tomalin (Knopf; $27.50). To counter the tenacious image of Jane Austen as a sweet-spirited spinster whose existence flowed without event, critics and biographers have typically pointed to the novels' subversive wit. Tomalin, however, looks squarely at the life itself, and there she finds little evidence of stability or contentment. Austen's famously satirical letters often deploy, rather than enjoy, humor; and the ten-year silence that followed her first burst of adult brilliance indicates disappointment and exile. Yet Tomalin's book remains brisk and sparkling—a page-turner, in fact—so that we balance the suffering of the redundant woman against the resourcefulness of the genius just as Austen might have wanted us to, if we'd had the luck to be numbered among her few, much loved friends.

LIMELIGHT, by Helen Gee (New Mexico; $19.95). In 1953, Gee opened Limelight, a coffeehouse on Seventh Avenue South that also served as the country's first gallery devoted exclusively to photography. Against a colorful backdrop of émigrés and artist wannabes who were her employees and her clientele, she recalls adventures and relationships with Edward Steichen, W. Eugene Smith, Berenice Abbott, and Robert Frank. No less interesting are her travails as a single mother and her negotiations with the Mafia bookies who operated out of her apartment building. This memoir rescues downtown bohemia from the usual Beat clichés.

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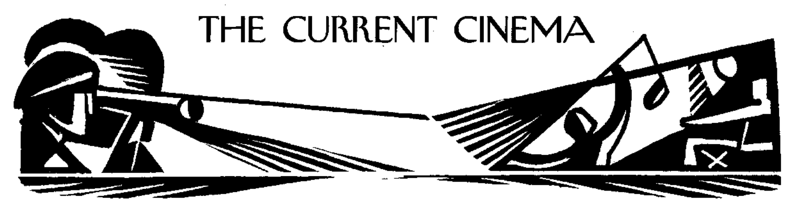


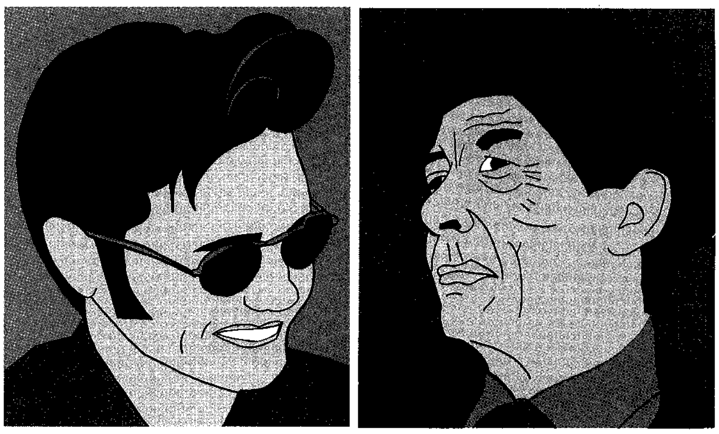
THOSE TEETH, THOSE EYES

Lovesick on Long Island.

BY DAPHNE MERKIN

ROMANTIC pursuit and movies are so inherently well matched that it sometimes seems as if the image of one person sprinting after another in the name of love—the Fates be damned—is a wholly cinematic invention. Some of Hollywood's most satisfying fare has mapped the trajectory of this endearing form of folly: my own budding sensibility was forever influenced by the no-obstacle-is-too-great scene near the end of "The Graduate," in which the nerdy but besotted Dustin Hoffman is transformed into a Goliath as he shakes the locked chapel door behind which Mrs. Robinson's beautiful daughter is about to marry someone else. But whether it is "Love Affair" (1939) or its 1957 remake, "An Affair to Remember," the very seventies role-inverting "The Way We Were" (in which Barbra Streisand hunts down a diffident Robert Redford) or the current, psychologically challenged romance "As Good as It Gets," these movies tend to pluck the same chords. You can sit and watch them ten, twenty, fifty years later, because they're set in an emotional realm beyond time—the zone of the devotional.

"Love and Death on Long Island" comes as something of a surprise, then: it's a movie about romantic pursuit as Roland Barthes or Jacques Derrida might have written it, mischievously decoding its own text. It plays so deftly with two different ideas at once—the power of film to shape amorous fantasy and the irresistible lure of our technology-filled age—that it sounds an utterly original note. The movie reveals its complex intentions right away, giving us both the Kodak moment and its ironic frame: An ocean breaks in frothy waves on the shore, along which a young man in a windbreaker walks his dog. The colors are gently faded—the sepia tones of nostalgia. Just as we are ready to sink into a congenial reverie, a crisp British voice cuts in. "Unlike you," it tells us, "I already know the ending... far, far from the surf of Long Island." The voice belongs to Giles De'Ath (John Hurt), a widowed author of immaculately highbrow novels, who resists invitations to publicize his work and leads a reclusive Luddite existence, attended by his talkative, snoopy housekeeper (Sheila Hancock). Everything changes when Giles wanders into the wrong movie one day and finds himself watching a "Porky's"-like spoof called "Hotpants College II" instead of the latest E. M. Forster adaptation. Amid



Jason Priestley and John Hurt: Looking for love in all the wrong places.

JP FOREST

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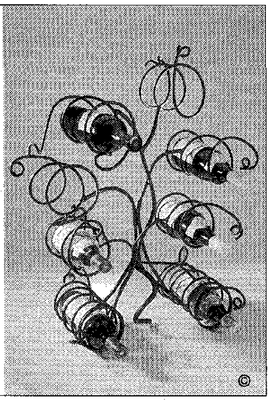

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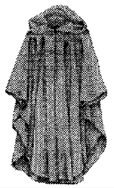

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shots of horny guys leering at half-dressed girls and dialogue on the level of "She is so totally hot," Giles spots the teen heartthrob Ronnie Bostock (Jason Priestley), playing a pizza-delivery boy, and is instantly smitten. Shortly thereafter, he returns for a second screening, and is struck by the actor's resemblance to Wallis's Pre-Raphaelite portrait of the poet Chatterton at the Tate Gallery—which sends his infatuation into high gear.

This rarefied soul, who has never besmirched himself with pop culture, starts buying magazines with names like *Sugar* in order to cut out photos of the "mega-dreamboat" and paste them into his scrapbook of Bostockiana. He rents the young actor's earlier works, "Skid Marks" and "Tex Mex," and buys a VCR and a TV set (it takes him a while to realize that you can't use one without the other) so as to study at his leisure the long-lashed blue eyes and perfect teeth. Stephen King and Guns n' Roses suddenly intrude upon this effete writer's awareness, and he delivers a prestigious lecture on "The Death of the Future," which, under cover of academic stuffiness, is a paean to the star's repertoire of smiles. But, finally, nothing will assuage Giles's longing except to track down the object of his increasingly indiscreet desire in the actor's native habitat of Chesterton, Long Island.

Chesterton turns out to look like someone's sweetly fictional idea of the Hamptons. (This part of the film was actually shot in Nova Scotia.) Giles checks into a tacky motel on the Long Island Expressway, and sets off, looking for clues to his prey's whereabouts. He strolls around town in his English tweeds, hands clasped behind his back, applying Darwinian curiosity to everything from a car that gives out electronic messages ("You are standing too close to this vehicle") to Chez d'Irv, a local diner with delusions of grandeur. One of the many ways in which the film subverts conventional expectations is its refusal to condescend to its premise; it keeps upping the ante without forgetting that its central character—half stalker, half *poète maudit*—is incapable of abandoning his innate sense of dignity, even in the most baroquely comic of circumstances. When Giles crashes his shopping cart into the cart of Ronnie's tenacious girlfriend (Fiona Loewi) and then blithely invents a goddaughter who has a crush on Ronnie, he seems inspired rather than nuts. When he explains to the bewildered but flattered icon that "Tex Mex" could be about "the plight of the exploited Gastarbeiters," you almost believe him. And when his ardor finally bursts forth in an impassioned declaration in Chez d'Irv, the intensity of his unrequited adoration makes this forlorn fogy seem transfigured by romantic greatness.

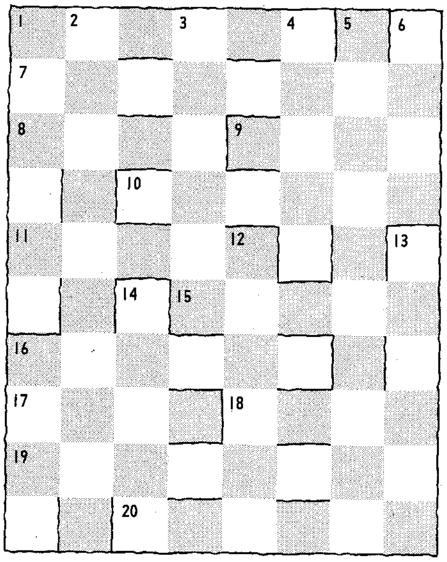
Based on a cult novel of the same title, by Gilbert Adair, the film is the first feature of British writer-director Richard Kwietniowski. From the start, his touch is distinctive: the movie has a quirky, pleasant buoyancy, while staying grounded in the most prosaic of details—a postman on his route, the rituals of making coffee, a pair of snazzy sunglasses. Hurt, with his stricken, lived-in face and mellifluously cultivated voice, gives off just the right amount of suppressed heat; Loewi, who looks like a fashion model with brains, is striking as the babe who knows how to get her endangered guy out of harm's way. The real revelation, however, is Priestley, who brings unexpected density to an essentially lightweight role.

Remarkably, "Love and Death" presents the fragile and familiar predicament of an older man's attraction to a good-looking, younger man without steeping it in sentimentality or tagging it as explicitly homoerotic. Giles's fixation, as he explains it, is about "the discovery of beauty where no one ever thought of looking for it." The film has the good-luck quality of a shiny, found penny; I wanted to pick it up and run with it. But then it occurred to me, somewhat sadly, that if "Love and Death" had been about a heterosexual obsession, it wouldn't have worked. The idea of romantic pursuit between men and women has been degraded by so much glib pathologizing—in films like "Fatal Attraction" and "Sleeping with the Enemy"—that we scarcely believe in its possibilities anymore.

Despite its subject, this is not a gay movie. It is about the hopelessly closeted nature of love, in general, and about how all of us—you, me, and Giles De'Ath—are capable of conjuring up love objects in the least likely of places. "Love and Death" assumes a refreshing pre-Freudian nonchalance about Giles's mad flight into the pop swamp of fanzine idolatry, which is oddly liberating. It's as though Humbert Humbert had wandered into "Death in Venice" and found release through MTV. ♦

8x10 CRYPTIC

NO. 35 BY FRASER SIMPSON



ACROSS

1 Young socialite swallowed argument (6)
7 Urchin wandered around in better health (8)
8 Touch horn when backing up (4)
9 Hobbyist's set of parts finally became flying toy (4)
10 He leaves the Peruvian container (3,3)
11 Older berry-producing shrub (5)
15 Appeal one way or the other (5)
16 Silver medalist Stojko, following onset of pulled groin? (6)
17 Burden (ours) (4)
18 Almost snarl, "Don't be so infantile" (4)
19 Near miss troubled discussion groups (8)
20 Overlooking offering from tribes, ideally (6)

DOWN

1 Baby's garment settled after riding up? (6)
2 Encouraged ancient spreading plant (10)
3 More pretentious pleasure-seeker blows his top? (6)
4 Toss out some of the victors (5)
5 Desecrator's destruction was the fastest (3,1,6)
6 Need rocky garden (4)
12 At hearing, drops rules (6)
13 Examine foreheads, say (6)
14 Sounds like fruit dropping straight to the ground (5)
16 Emily, stop dancing (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 34 appears on page 92. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.

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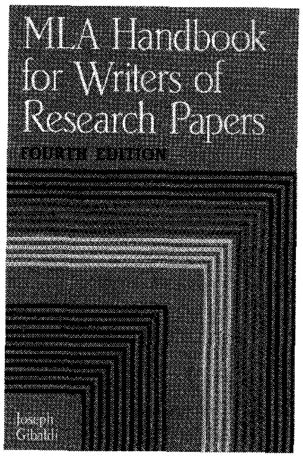

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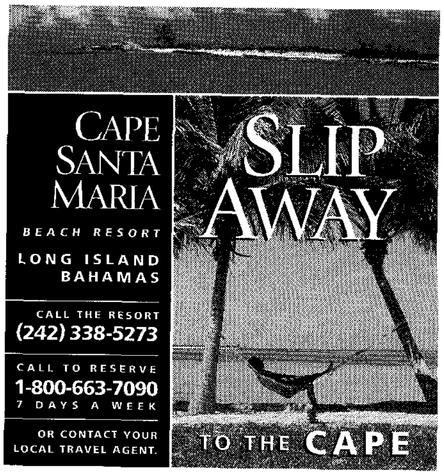
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Saddam? Saddam? How are you? Marty Fleck, the new publicist. I've been on hold for twenty minutes—this is not a great start for us. Let me tell you what I have so far. First of all, no offense, but you know nothing about my business. And second, I think you've done enough talking. Clearly, your way is not working. Here's what I know: you run an oppressive society, you're afraid to leave your bunker, and you tend to kill people in your own family. And this is what I came up with after just two phone calls.

O.K., you're not a bad-looking man. And I'm sure you've got a lot of guys around telling you so. But they're not helping you. For starters, the mustache. Everyone knows you're a tough guy. No need to keep beating that drum. We get it. You're a tough guy. We're scared. Happy? Now it's time to really soften things up.

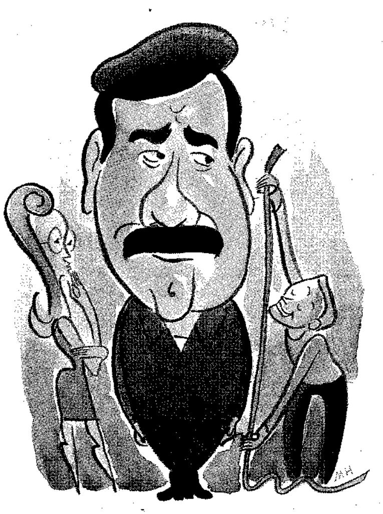
You know what would be great? If we could get a picture of you—no mustache—with the U.N. inspectors in front of one of those secret weapons plants, and everyone's smiling. You can have them arrested after the shoot. Go nuts, torture them. I'm not going to tell you your business. But I've got to have that picture.

Real fast, let me run through the week for you:

Monday: Quick phoner on "Imus in the Morning." It's not an interview. You're playing Tariq Aziz in a sketch. They're faxing over the copy this afternoon. They're open to changes. At noon, you cut the ribbon on a new Starbucks downtown, where the Hilton was. The rest of the afternoon you're in the studio, recording the Muslim version of "Angela's Ashes" for Books on Tape. Monday night, you're off—you may want to use the time to return calls.

Tuesday: You're at the post office when it opens, so we can film you mailing a beret to Monica Lewinsky. Two o'clock, you go on Radio Free Iraq and read "Dilbert." We're still waiting to hear about simulcasting the show in Jordan and Syria. You know how these things work—everything takes three meetings with these guys, but you get one, you get both. At night, you're club-hopping with Ingrid Casares. I think it's dressy.

Wednesday: The whole day is the barbecue in the Southern No-Fly Zone with all the relatives you haven't killed. I know, you were told the Northern No-Fly Zone, but we had to move it because of the Élite Republican Guard Swap Meet. Bring sneakers and a bathing suit. That night, you're judging a talent contest at Ahmed's Comedy Cabal—Funniest Person Still in the Oil Industry. You may want to eat before. The only thing on the menu is nachos.



Thursday: In the morning, you meet with the Concerned Housewives of Baghdad. The gals will present you with a thirty-foot Scud-missile cozy they've been knitting for the last seven years. Now, I know you don't like women, but we need them, so make nice. Then—and the time is flexible on this—there's a photo op where you're walking into a house where dissidents read poetry. By eight o'clock, you're home in the bunker for "Friends," "Seinfeld," and Nick at Night. But you have to be downtown at midnight to do a round of meet-and-greets at the karaoke bars. Lots of French people there, which is great for us.

Friday: This is all day. The TV crew shows up at 6 A.M. for the Tour of Palace G—that's in Bunker 27. It's the stuff we talked about: what you've got hanging on your walls, what's in your refrigerator, maybe you go through your record collection. You know, show people how you kick back when the world is holding you hostage. We should wrap around 8 P.M. Dinner is at the Jihad Club, then you helicopter to Basra to christen the new casino boat, the Trump Taj Muhammad. It would be great if we could get you shaking hands with a high roller, but that's your call. F.Y.I., Jay and the Americans are in the lounge. Sorry, but they couldn't move the date. Jay's, you know, connected.

Saturday: 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. you have the open audition for new human shields. We're going to need at least a hundred, but don't feel you have to cast the whole thing in one day. If you put that kind of pressure on yourself, you're going to wind up using people you're not happy with. Saturday night is the benefit roast for Red Adair. I got you out of the scramble-golf tournament in the morning, but the silent auction starts at six o'clock. Dinner is seven (sheep's head or fish), and we can duck out for forty-five minutes after the raffle and before Mark Russell goes on at nine. If you want to stay for Russell, I'll have Al come up with some heckle lines beforehand. The roast is scheduled for ten, but you and I know it'll be closer to ten-twenty before they pat everyone down again.

Sunday: Coffee with Kofi Annan, and then the rest of the day is yours. Unless, you know, we get bombed. But I think you've bought another month—maybe even till May Sweeps. If I'm wrong, kill me. ♦

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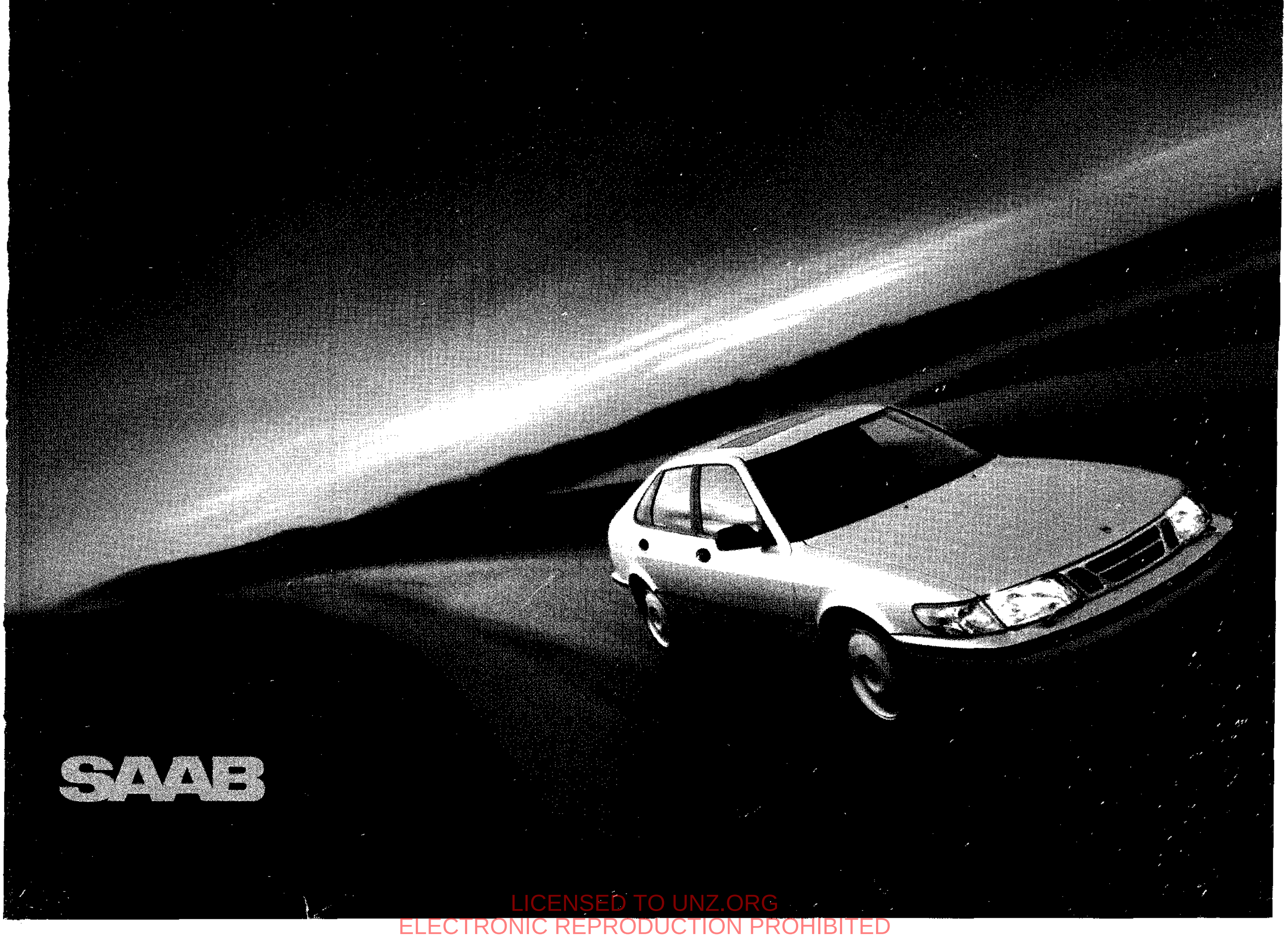

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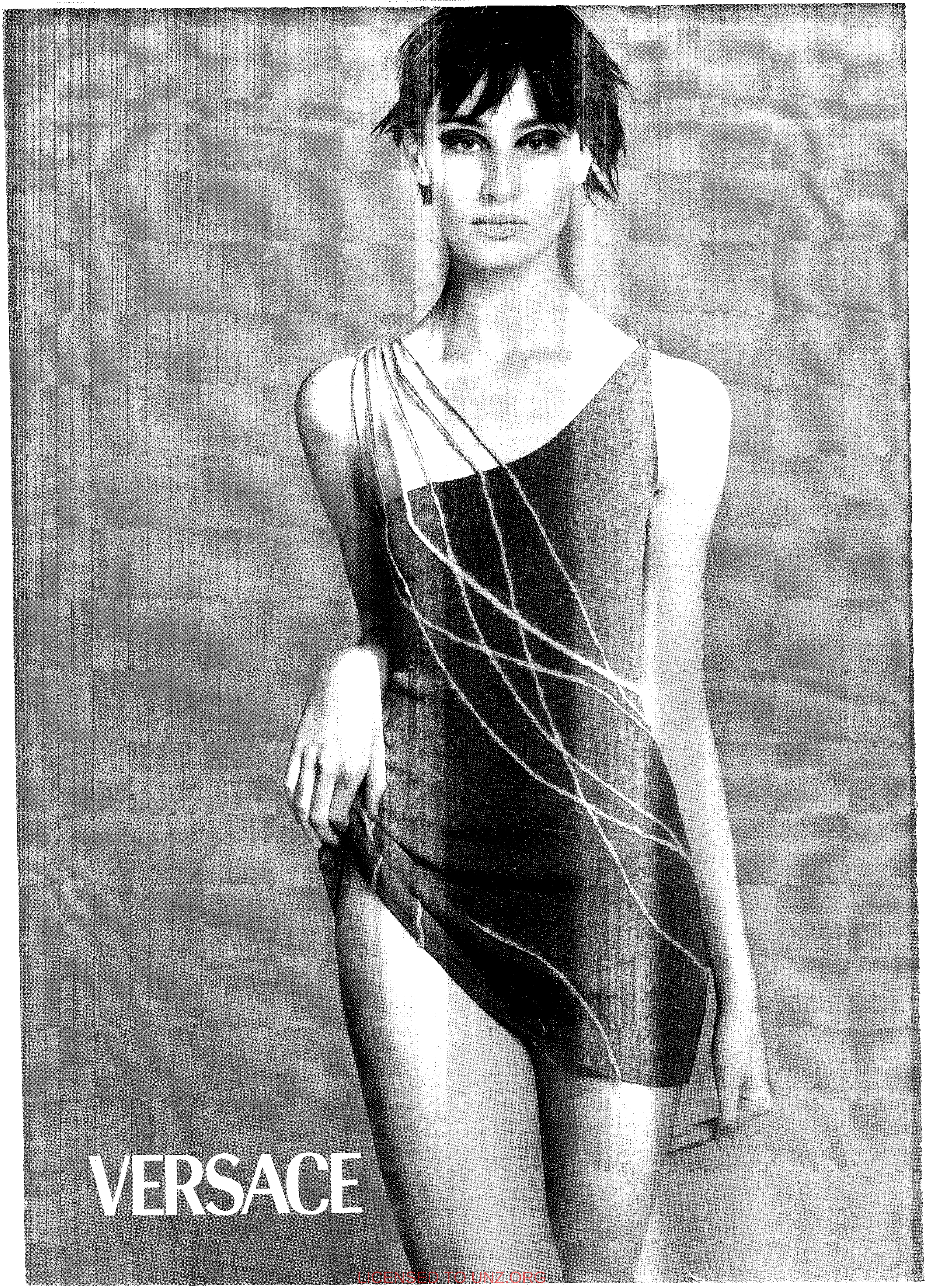
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